

**Evaluation of the
Indianapolis Mayor Sponsored
Charter Schools**

**Irvington Community Schools
Fourth-year Charter Review**

2012-2013 School Year

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OFFICE OF EDUCATION INNOVATION

Office of the Mayor of Indianapolis

FOURTH YEAR CHARTER REVIEW

Irvington Community Schools

April 11-June 4, 2013

The Indianapolis Mayor's Office Fourth Year Charter Review (FYCR) is designed to assess the development of the school as it finishes its fourth year of operation, and serves as an evaluation of the school now that it is well established. The Fourth Year Charter Review Protocol is based on the *Performance Framework*, which is used to determine a school's success relative to a common set of indicators, as well as school-based goals.

Consistent with the Indianapolis Mayor's Office Performance Framework, the following four core questions and sub-questions are examined to determine a school's success:

- 1. *Is the educational program a success?***
 - 1.1. *Is the school making adequate yearly academic progress, as measured by the Indiana Department of Education's system of accountability?*
 - 1.2. *Are students making substantial and adequate gains over time, as measured using value-added analysis?*
 - 1.3. *Is the school outperforming schools that the students would have been assigned to attend?*
 - 1.4. *Is the school meeting its school-specific educational goals?*
- 2. *Is the organization effective and well-run?***
 - 2.1. *Is the school in sound fiscal health?*
 - 2.2. *Are the school's student enrollment, attendance, and retention rates strong?*
 - 2.3. *Is the school's Board active and competent in its oversight?*
 - 2.4. *Is there a high level of parent satisfaction with the school?*
 - 2.5. *Is the school administration strong in its academic and organizational leadership?*
 - 2.6. *Is the school meeting its school-specific organizational and management performance goals?*
- 3. *Is the school meeting its operations and access obligations?***
 - 3.1. *Has the school satisfactorily completed all of its organizational structure and governance obligations?*
 - 3.2. *Is the school's physical plant safe and conducive to learning?*
 - 3.3. *Has the school established and implemented a fair and appropriate pupil enrollment process?*
 - 3.4. *Is the school properly maintaining special education files for its special needs students?*
 - 3.5. *Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to students with limited English proficiency?*

4. *Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?*

- 4.1. *Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?*
- 4.2. *Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?*
- 4.3. *For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support and preparation for post-secondary options?*
- 4.4. *Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?*
- 4.5. *Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?*
- 4.6. *Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?*
- 4.7. *Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?*
- 4.8. *Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?*

COMPLETION OF THE FOURTH YEAR CHARTER REVIEW

As part of its oversight of charter schools, the Mayor's Office authorized Research & Evaluation Resources (RER) to conduct site visits of schools in their fourth year of operation. The purpose is to present the school and the Mayor's Office a professional judgment on conditions and practices at the school, which are best provided through an external perspective. This report uses multiple sources of evidence to understand the school's performance. Evidence collection begins with a review of key documents and continues on-site through additional document review, classroom visits and interviews with any number of stakeholders. Findings provided by the site visits can be used to celebrate what the school is doing well and prioritize its areas for improvement in preparation for renewal. It is the task of the site visit team to report on the following pre-identified aspects of the *Performance Framework* and to assist the Mayor's Office in its completion of the FYCR Protocol: *Responses to sub-question 3.4 of Core Question 3 and responses to sub-questions 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, and 4.8 of Core Question 4.*

The outcome of this review will provide the school with a written report that includes a judgment and supporting evidence on various aspects of the school, based on a rubric of indicators developed for each of the four core questions and sub-questions in the *Performance Framework*. The assessment system utilizes the following judgments:

Does not meet standard

Approaching standard

Meets standard

Exceeds standard

Note: In the case of the sub-questions under Core Question 4 of the Performance Framework, there is no rating for *Exceeds standard*. *Meets standard* is the highest possible rating.

Irvington Community Schools

Background and History of the Irvington Community Schools

The charter for the Irvington Community Schools (ICS) was granted by Ball State for the 2002-2003 academic year. Irvington Community Schools began with 118 K-5 students in one building on Kitley Avenue, and has grown to three campuses—Irvington Community Elementary School, Irvington Community Middle School, and Irvington Preparatory Academy. The elementary school has been in existence since the original charter was granted by Ball State University, while the high school was established in 2007, and the middle school opened in the fall of 2010.

The 2010-2011 academic year brought several significant changes in the Irvington Community Schools. There was a change in school leadership, with the founding president, Mr. Tim Erghott, leaving the school to pursue other opportunities. Mr. David Nidiffer, who served the school as Chief Financial Officer from 2006 to October 2010, became the Interim Chief Executive Officer, before being named full-time Chief Executive Officer in March 2011. Additionally, Irvington Community Middle School opened in the building previously occupied by the Irvington Preparatory Academy, which moved to a new, larger, building.

The 2010-11 academic year was also challenging in that the Leadership team actively addressed issues of change within the three schools, while striving to maintain the identity of the Irvington Community Schools. To reach that goal, the Irvington Community Schools aggressively took on new projects, such as adopting the TAP program at the middle and high schools, switching from the Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress to the ACT PLAN/EXPLORE at Irvington Preparatory Academy, developing a new marketing plan for ICS, and providing a cohesive behavior plan, based on the Irvington Way, that is being applied at all three schools. The leadership also worked to retain students from the elementary school, to the middle school, and on into the high school.

In the 2011-12 school year the Irvington Community Schools were recognized by the Department of Education of the State of Indiana as an “A” school, a reflection of the schools’ focus on providing their students with a quality education. There were additional staff changes in this school year, with Ms. Deanna Pryor moving from her position of Director of Operations at Irvington Community Elementary School to become Director of Operations of Irvington Preparatory Academy. Mrs. Jodie Lannan, who had been a classroom teacher at the elementary school, replaced Ms. Pryor as Director of Operations of Irvington Community Elementary School.

The Evaluation Process

In 2009, Irvington Community Schools applied for a charter with the Office of Education Innovation of the Mayor of Indianapolis. Consequently, Irvington Community Schools are undergoing the Fourth Year Charter Review and are required to address standards 3.4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7 and 4.8. It is important to keep in mind, however, that Irvington Community Elementary School is actually in its 11th year of operation (although not in its current configuration),

the Irvington Preparatory Academy is in its 6th year of operation, and the Irvington Community Middle School is in its 2nd full academic year. The very different lengths of operation affects the evaluation and impacts how well each school meets the standards of the Mayor's Accountability Framework, and should be kept in mind when considering the outcome of this evaluation.

Research & Evaluation Resources staff engaged in a number of evidence-collecting activities. The focus of this evaluation was to gauge perceptions of key stakeholders at the school in relation to the areas of the performance framework that are part of the evaluation. RER conducted focus group discussions with students, staff, and parents, as well as interviews with the school administration and Board members. These focus groups, interviews and classroom observations for the three schools of the Irvington Community Schools were conducted over a 7-week period, beginning April 11, 2013 and ending June 4, 2013. Each school will be evaluated separately on the standards set by the Office of Education Innovation.

In the following report, standards and indicators are listed with relevant evidence given related to the performance criteria. The Special Education report is presented using the framework required by the Office of Education Innovation. Her report is included in its entirety and includes the indicators and required evidence examined for the special education audit procedure. For the remaining standards and indicators, each of the three campuses will be considered independently. Following the discussion of each indicator, a summary of strengths and areas for attention are provided for the core question.

Irvington Community Elementary School

On April 23 & 24, 2013, two observers conducted classrooms observations during the 4th year review of Irvington Community Elementary School. Classroom observers spent 6.5 hours (392 minutes) observing 13 classrooms, 264 students, and 13 teachers. On average, each observation lasted 28.8 minutes and the observed student to teacher ratio was 20.3:1. Two of the teachers were observed by both classroom observers at the same time in order to ensure inter-judge reliability. Please see the Irvington Community Elementary Classroom Observation Summary for a detailed analysis of the observations conducted. Focus groups and interviews with school leadership and parents were conducted on April 23-25, and April 30, 2013 and took place at the school.

Irvington Community Middle School

On April 16-17, 2013, two observers conducted classrooms observations during the 4th year review of Irvington Community Middle School. Eight classroom observations were performed on site using the classroom observation instrument provided by the Office of Education Innovation. These observations lasted for 20-30 minutes. Classroom observers spent 4.1 hours (246 minutes) observing 8 classrooms, 182 students, and 8 teachers. On average, each observation lasted 30.75 minutes and the observed student to teacher ratio was 22.75:1. Two of the teachers were observed by both classroom observers at the same time in order to ensure inter-judge reliability. Please see the Irvington Community Middle School Classroom Observation Summary for a detailed analysis of the

observations conducted. Interviews with members of the Parent-Teacher-Student Association were conducted on April 17, 2013 and took place at Irvington Community Elementary School. This meeting was intended to serve as a joint meeting for the Irvington Community Middle School and Irvington Preparatory Academy PTSA. However, there was a problem with communication regarding the time and a limited subset of parents came to the meeting. Consequently, additional information regarding parent satisfaction was gathered through phone interviews with a randomly chosen subset of four parents over the period of June 17th. An additional interview with Mr. Mike McFadden, Director of Operations at Irvington Community Middle Schools was conducted on June 4, 2013.

Irvington Preparatory Academy

On April 12, 2013, two observers conducted classrooms observations during the 4th year review of Irvington Preparatory Academy. Nine classroom observations were performed on site using the classroom observation instrument provided by the Office of Education Innovation. Classroom observers spent 4.5 hours (276 minutes) observing 9 classrooms, 139 students, and 9 teachers. On average, each observation lasted 30.6 minutes and the observed student to teacher ratio was 15.4:1. Two of the teachers were observed by both classroom observers at the same time in order to ensure inter-judge reliability. Please see the Irvington Preparatory Academy Classroom Observation Summary for a detailed analysis of the observations conducted. Interviews with members of the Parent-Teacher-Student Association were conducted on April 17, 2013 and took place at Irvington Community Elementary School. This meeting was intended to serve as a joint meeting for the Irvington Community Middle School and Irvington Preparatory Academy PTSA. However, there was a problem with communication regarding the time and a limited subset of parents came to the meeting. Consequently, additional information regarding parent satisfaction was gathered through phone interviews with a randomly chosen subset of four parents over the period of June 17th. An additional interview with Ms. Pryor was conducted on June 4, 2013.

INDICATORS ADDRESSED FOR IRVINGTON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

<i>Core Question 1: Is the educational program a success?</i>
<i>Core Question 2: Is the organization effective and well-run?</i>
<i>Core Question 3: Is the school meeting its operations and access obligations?</i>
<i>3.4. Is the school properly maintaining special education files for its special needs students?</i>
<i>Core Question 4: Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?</i>
<i>4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?</i>
<i>4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?</i>
<i>4.3 For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support and preparation for post-secondary options?</i>
<i>4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?</i>
<i>4.5. Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?</i>
<i>4.6. Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?</i>
<i>4.7. Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?</i>
<i>4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?</i>

Special Education Evaluation On- Site Visit: Irvington Community Schools

Visit Date: April 11th, 17th, and 24th 2013

Report Completed by: A. Angelov

Summary of On Site Visit:

Anyone who spends time at Irvington Community School (ICS) cannot help but be impressed. Building a school from the ground up is no small task and the staff of ICS makes it look easy. The buildings were pleasing to the senses, and student centered. The staff were extremely accommodating, well prepared, and a pleasure to work with throughout the day. Additionally, families were very open and willing to share via phone interviews and students were excited to share their perspectives on their school during on site interviews. The on site data collection took place for three full days in April. The special education staff arranged for interviews with administration, teachers, students, and IEP audits. Additional data from the Indiana DOE website, as well as the school's website are cited throughout the report to help triangulate data collected on site.

This report provides feedback in three forms: evidence of current strengths, evidence of next best opportunities to grow, and ratings on updated standards in the Mayor's Office's Performance Framework. All three campus sites were visited for equal amounts of time. This report combines the data from all three sites into one culminating report. This evaluation experience has been developed to provide ICS with a picture of what they are doing well and ideas and data to help support decision making for next steps of growth specific to special education services. This data is meant to be a supplement to all other school wide data provided by other evaluators and not meant to be a complete picture of the school; more specifically it is meant to be a snap shot of how the school is doing specific to special education services. Attempts should not be made to use this data outside of this context. Additionally, ICS was allowed to purposely select participants for interviews (administrators, gen ed & special ed teachers, and students), while the evaluator randomly selected IEPs for document review and families to interview. The selection methods should also be kept in mind as reading the data provided.

Evidence of strengths of special education services:

ICS is a fully functioning Local Educational Agency (LEA) under Indiana Law (Article 7). Since its last review (2011) ICS has maintained its special education numbers. About 15% of the school population has an IEP. This is significant because this directly correlates with previous years data. ICS is

doing a nice job of retaining students with IEPs. Those services are primarily high incident disabilities as defined by Article 7. With such a small special education population, the overwhelming majority of state level data, specific to students with IEPs, has been suppressed. That being said, ICS earned an A from the state in 2011-2012 and their 2013 preliminary IREAD-3 results are impressive. More than 89% of ICS 3rd graders passed IREAD-3, which exceeds the state average by more than 5%.

In previous evaluations of ICS, much of their focus had been on utilizing NWEA data to make instructional decisions. This data focused climate has evolved into daily practices across all buildings that feel natural and have obviously had an impact. Data was displayed at each building and part of daily discussions between teachers and students. If you talk to the teachers at the elementary, they believe they know why their school has turned the corner to go from good to great, and attribute many of the positive changes to the addition of Jo Bischoff to the Special Education staff.

Just stepping through the door of the ICS elementary, you can feel a difference. The teachers and students are overwhelmingly happy and the climate is one focused on collaboration and results. Another teacher shared, *"The common core have allowed us to align across grade levels, so the kids get a very consistent experience. I like that we work together to write the kids goals based on data. We write realistic and measureable goals. Jo has a toolkit in her brain that is ridiculous! She just figures it out. She is an amazing problem solver. Our team is really working well together."* Another elementary teacher shared, *"Our SPED teacher is amazing! She drops what she is doing and helps us. She is actually in our classroom! She has developed a school-wide schedule that really works. I love her quick phonics screener. It gives us great info quickly, it is so helpful."* Another teacher shared, *"Jo has done an amazing a job of training us and if she left, her system would run and we would know what we were looking for in our next person. The sub on Wed for paperwork is great. The SPED folks truly enjoy their jobs, which helps the rest of us enjoy working with them. They want to be here and we want them here, they can't leave."* The inclusion model that the special education staff at the elementary is an example of best practice in co-teaching. ICS's other sites could benefit greatly from recreating and implementing this model.

Nationally, autism has been a huge game changer for many schools. The number of students with an ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) label have gone from 1 in 150 (2008) to 1 in 85 (2012). Many schools are responding by trying to make these students fit into existing curriculum and not experiencing much success. ICS's elementary has responded by developing and implementing an individualized program based on cutting edge research and techniques. In many ways, they didn't just

accept a student with severe ASD, they became THE school for this student. The foresight to begin this process and establish a thoughtful and research based program will undoubtedly payoff tenfold in upcoming years, given the growing population of students with ASD. Families with students with ASD are often struggling to find schools that accept them, but ICS's elementary has set the stage for other schools.

ICS also has innovative ways of utilizing resources to get the job done on a shoestring budget. One interesting use of time, specifically for special education, is their use of building substitutes. The district has one permanent substitute that travels to each of the buildings. In some buildings this person is used on a regular basis to provide special education teachers time to do paperwork. This is an excellent way to utilize existing resources and meet a need. It also explains why IEPs in those buildings are so well written.

Evidence of next best opportunities to grow specific to special education services:

Since their previous special education audit, it is clear that ICS has paid attention to opportunities for growth and in many cases addressed those issues. This is promising for the future of ICS, but three areas from the previous audit still persist: connecting with outside agencies, disseminating information about special education on the ICS website, and ensuring that buildings are easily accessible to persons with disabilities.

As cited in the previous report, opportunities exist for ICS to grow by examining how they interact with outside state agencies. While ICS has a strong handle on relationships with private outside service providers (i.e. providers they have contracts with), holding state agencies like vocational rehabilitation and mental health service providers accountable for services provided to ICS students is important. These outside agencies play a critical role in ensuring that students and families receive all entitled services under IDEA and ADA. These services may not come from ICS budgets, but they do come from ICS students and families in the form of taxes, insurance agencies, or social service funds. This issue is increasingly more glaring at IPA. The high school has failed to establish a working relationship with vocational rehabilitation, which has culminated into noncompliant transition plans.

Given ICS's focus on getting students to college, in many ways, this is an example of how special education falls short of adhering to the spirit and intent of the overall ICS mission. During the file audit, no IEP reviewed at the high school had a compliant or workable transition plan. Additionally, there were no signs that a counselor from vocational rehabilitation had even been invited to IEP meetings.

Students with IEPs are entitled to financial and academic support in college. It's the role of vocational rehabilitation to guide students with IEPs into college and/or post secondary training at no cost. Currently, it is unclear if IPA graduates with IEPs are getting the full benefit of these services. Once these relationships are established, IPA should share this information via their website.

The previous evaluation report encouraged ICS to include special education information on their website. While the website is new and fully functional, it does not adequately disseminate information about special education services offered by ICS. More pictures of students with exceptional needs, as well as, information on special education services would be helpful and welcoming for families with students with exceptional needs as they decide if ICS would be a good choice for their child. Currently all other academic programs are listed on the website with detail and pictures. A tab specific for answering questions about special education (services, contact information, and processes) would be a helpful addition. Given the popularity of "The Irvington Way" commercials, one could be made about special education at ICS.

It should be noted that ICMS acted on the previous evaluation and moved their special education classroom from the basement, up to the ground level. Additionally, a wheel chair accessible ramp was put in the main entrance of the ICMS building. These are significant improvements and deserve to be recognized, and it should be noted that ICMS is currently in compliance via "grandfathering of existing or older buildings" and has passed all building codes and regulations as certified for schools. As an existing building ICMS is not required to meet the same building codes as new construction. However, the physical building could still be made more accessible to persons with disabilities. There are no handicapped parking spaces and the staff parking lot is in the back of the building. This means that staff and visitors with disabilities must figure out how to get to the front of the building given that the back door is permanently locked. Additionally, the building has multiple levels and there is no elevator.

Most interesting is the difference in climates and knowledge across the 3 buildings. When general education teachers from each building were asked about the process in place to refer a student for special education testing, I got 3 distinctly different answers:

ICES Teacher: *"We have an RTI process. We have grade level teams and we meet every month. We have to have three data points. We meet and talk about what is going on and then develop strategies to try. After trying multiple strategies and see no progress, then we refer them to SPED."*

ICMS Teacher: *"I'm not entirely sure."*

IPA Teacher: *"I go to the special ed teacher and make a recommendation."*

This first answer (ICES) is the ideal answer to this question. It shows that the general education teachers understand, buy in to, and are active participants in providing daily services to students with IEPs. While ICES has put in place highly functional procedures for special education, the other two buildings still struggle to maintain legal compliance. The voices from these buildings show how a focus on best practice is far more powerful than a focus on how to stay in compliance with the law. When asked how they include students with IEPs in their classrooms, the following answers were provided:

ICES: *"The common core has allowed us to align across grade levels, so the kids get a very consistent experience. I like that we work together to write the kids goals based on data."*

ICMS: *"I keep track of accommodations. I also co-teach a course with the special ed teacher. I also do a lot of the mandatory tutoring for the students with IEPs. The paper trail is hard to follow."*

IPA: *"We meet all of their modifications as best as we can with the facilities and resources we have."*

These three statements show three different philosophies and levels of understanding of best practices in special education. ICS should find a way to align the services, philosophy, and procedures of special education across its three buildings. Additionally, given that ICS uses TAP for teacher evaluation, the level of support and feedback teachers are given specific to implementing special education services are lacking. Currently, special education teachers get no formal feedback on how they perform in case conferences, how they engage with families, how they write IEPs or other special education related paperwork, or hold them accountable for students meeting their IEP goals. All of these things are extremely important and warrant support at this time. In response to the need to align services, the Irvington Community Schools have hired Jana Goebel to serve as Team Leader for the corporation. Ms. Goebel will report directly to David Nidiffer and will be tasked with implementing consistent practices and policies across all three schools. She will also ensure that all teachers of record are performing adequately in case conferences, move-ins, and other special education services. Jana will also be evaluating Special Education teachers, with input from the individual school directors, in the future.

Evidence Specific to Performance Framework Rubric:

- 1.1 *Exceeds* Evidence~ ICS earned an A from the state of Indiana and their IREAD-3 scores were 5% above state average.
- 2.2 *Exceeds* Evidence~ About 15% of the school population has an IEP. This is significant because this directly correlates with previous years data. ICS is doing a nice job of retaining students with IEPs.
- 3.2 *Meets* Evidence~ Building walkthroughs and classroom observations revealed healthy and engaged atmospheres.
- 3.4 *Approaching* Evidence~ The ICMS physical building is still not ADA compliant. During the file audit, no IEP reviewed at the high school had a compliant or workable transition plan. Additionally, there were no signs that a counselor from vocational rehabilitation had even been invited to IEP meetings.
- 4.2 *Meets* Evidence~ The “Irvington Way” is felt across all three campuses.
- 4.3 *Approaching* Evidence~ During the file audit, of the sample of IEP’s reviewed at the high school none had a compliant or workable transition plan. Additionally, there were no signs that a counselor from vocational rehabilitation had been invited to IEP meetings for those files.
- 4.5 *Meets* Evidence~ ICS is currently using the TAP model for evaluating and providing feedback to teachers. This model includes little focus on special education and completely misses providing feedback specific to a teacher’s ability to run a case conference, write an IEP or any special education paperwork, implement a behavior plan, or work with paraprofessionals.
- 4.7 *Meets* Evidence~ The climate and functionality of ICES special education program should be replicated at ICMS and IPA.
- 4.8 *Exceeds* Evidence~ All families were happy with their services.

Performance Framework Results Specific to Special Education:

PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

Core Question 1: Is the educational program a success?	FINDING
1.1. Is the school making adequate yearly academic progress, as measured by the Indiana Department of Education's system of accountability?	Exceeds
1.2. Are students making substantial and adequate gains over time, as measured using value-added analysis?	
1.3. Is the school outperforming schools that the students would have been assigned to attend?	
1.4. Is the school meeting its school-specific educational goals?	
Core Question 2: Is the organization effective and well-run?	FINDING
2.1. Is the school in sound fiscal health?	Exceeds
2.2. Are the school's student enrollment, attendance, and retention rates strong?	
2.3. Is the school's board active and competent in its oversight?	
2.4. Is there a high level of parent satisfaction with the school?	
2.5. Is the school administration strong in its academic and organizational leadership?	
2.6. Is the school meeting its school-specific organizational and management performance goals?	
Core Question 3: Is the school meeting its operations and access obligations?	FINDING
3.1. Has the school satisfactorily completed all of its organizational structure and governance obligations?	Meets
3.2. Is the school's physical plant safe and conducive to learning?	
3.3. Has the school established and implemented a fair and appropriate pupil enrollment process?	Approaching
3.4. Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to students with special needs?	
3.5. Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to students with limited English proficiency?	
Core Question 4: Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?	FINDING
4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?	Meets
4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?	Approaching
4.3. For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support and preparation for post-secondary options?	
4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?	
4.5. Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?	Meets
4.6. Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?	
4.7. Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?	Meets
4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?	Exceeds

Irvington Community Elementary School

Standard Four: Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?

4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum does not align with the state standards; b) the school does not conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school does not regularly review scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) the sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas does not focus on core (prioritized) learning objectives; e) the staff lacks understanding and/or consensus as to how the curriculum documents and related program materials are used to effectively deliver instruction; f) there is a lack of programs and materials available to deliver the curriculum effectively.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum does not align with the state standards; b) the school does not conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school does not regularly review scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) the sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas does not focus on core (prioritized) learning objectives; e) the staff lacks understanding and/or consensus as to how the curriculum documents and related program materials are used to effectively deliver instruction; f) there is a lack of programs and materials available to deliver the curriculum effectively.
Meets standard	The school: a) curriculum aligns with the state standards; b) conducts systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school regularly reviews scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) has a sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas that is prioritized and focuses on the core learning objectives; e) the staff understands and uniformly uses curriculum documents and related program materials to effectively deliver instruction; f) programs and materials are available to deliver the curriculum effectively.

Data gathered through classroom observations, focus group interviews and interviews with the school leadership revealed that the curriculum being enacted at Irvington Community Elementary School (ICES) is standards-based and aligns with the Indiana State Standards (indicator a). The Common Core curriculum is being rolled out in the lower grades with grades K-2 far along in the process of cross-walking the curriculums and 3rd grade beginning to study the essentials of Common Core for that grade. Additionally, many of the curriculum maps and lesson plans provided by the Director of Operations, Jodie Lannan, were aligned to the Common Core curriculum. The teaching staff reported that they use the Indiana State Standards as a guide when they design their unit and lesson plans at the beginning of the academic year, and that they provide Mrs. Lannan with frequent updates regarding their progress in covering the state standards, always mindful of the need to present the content in time for ISTEP testing (indicator c). The site visit occurred close to the implementation of the online ISTEP testing, and consequently it was possible to observe the preparations for ISTEP. While it was emphasized to the students that they needed to be well rested and prepared for the test, no sense of urgency or pressure to perform was placed on them. The Technology Coordinator, Ms. Jennifer Woo, is to be particularly commended for her skill in maintaining the older computers that make up the computer room at ICES, and in preparing them for the ISTEP administration.

The use of student performance data when reviewing the curriculum at ICES is exemplary (indicator b). The teaching staff reports that grade level teams meet at least once each quarter, and often on a monthly basis, to review data from NWEA, Fountas & Pinnell and ISTEP scores in order to review and revise their curriculum maps. The teaching staff reported that they view their curriculum as a “working document that changes and grows with student performance.” Additional curriculum review occurs in the summer when the leadership and teaching staff at ICES evaluate the current curriculum maps by grade level against the state standards and, where appropriate, the Common Core. They then take data from the NWEA MAP and Fountas and Pinnell to identify trends in student performance. For example, in the previous review, the staff had noticed that the high-performing 5th grade math students were not being challenged enough, and consequently adapted the 5th grade math curriculum to include appropriate 6th grade standards in order to provide a challenge for these students.

ICES maintains a sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas that are prioritized and focused on the core learning objectives (indicator d). At the start of each year Ms. Lannan begins by reviewing and evaluating each teacher’s curriculum map for the year. Testing dates for NWEA, ISTEP, and Fountas and Pinnell are noted on the curriculum maps to ensure alignment of content. Mrs. Lannan reported that a study group made up of members of the teaching staff had recently completed a vertical articulation exercise to ensure that each grade level is aware of the needs of the instructors above and below their grade. The vertical alignment was completed over a 5 month period, with a group of teachers, one from each grade, meeting weekly to ensure that they were all using a common vocabulary and set of expectations across all the different programs that they use. As Mrs. Lannan noted “we are looking for continuity and perpetuity, so we decided to dig in and get the common vocabulary.” The goal of this exercise was also to ensure that each student had the knowledge necessary to succeed in the next grade, as well as to serve as a curriculum for new teachers and substitute teachers. Mrs. Lannan reported that the vertical alignment has been completed for math and reading, with writing planned for next year. This process of vertical alignment has set the stage for a more formal horizontal alignment exercise, although it should be noted that ICES does implement a series of meetings between “above and below” grade teachers so that they can discuss expectations for the students moving into the “above” grade and ensure that students are prepared to succeed as they move through each grade.

The Irvington Community Elementary School staff understands and uniformly uses curriculum documents and related program materials to deliver instruction (indicator e). Focus groups interviews, informal conversations, and classroom observations revealed a staff that is up-to-date in educational best practices and knowledgeable in the curriculums they teach. It should be noted that during the self-evaluation performed as part of the 3rd year review, the ICES staff identified a lack of alignment between and within grades as a weakness in their current practices. Subsequently, the leadership and staff undertook the vertical alignment exercise described above to address this weakness.

Irvington Community Elementary School has provided teachers with a great environment to teach. The majority of classrooms observed contained the programs and materials to deliver the curriculum effectively (indicator f). As one teacher noted “I could always use more, but we have enough of everything we need.”

There is technology, in the form of smart classrooms, computers for student use, and internet access, available in nearly every classroom. While technology is readily available, it has not been updated for several years and is rapidly becoming obsolete. It was specifically noted by one classroom teacher that “classroom computers are hit and miss. I have seven in my classroom but only some are working on any day.” It was noted during ISTEP preparation that many of the computers in the computer room are nonfunctional on a regular basis. Ms. Woo performs an admirable job of ensuring that enough computers are operable when needed for testing. It is important to note that the organizational structure of the Irvington Community Schools places the responsibility for providing effective educational technology with the leadership of ICS, rather than with each school’s Director of Operations. For that reason, ICES was not considered to be lacking in this indicator. Discussions with David Nidiffer, CEO of Irvington Community Schools revealed that leadership is aware of the need to upgrade the computing infrastructure and equipment and they are addressing these issues. As can be seen throughout this report, issues of technology arise at all three ICS schools.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Community Elementary School implements a diverse set of standardized assessments and effectively uses data from those assessments to drive instruction and professional development.

The school leadership is providing opportunities for the teaching staff to improve instruction through professional development and school-wide exercises.

Vertical alignment exercises have strengthened the curriculum of ICES and have provided staff with an opportunity to fully engage with their curriculum. These exercises have resulted in documents that will be of benefit to the Irvington Community Elementary School as it moves forward.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Community Middle School

Standard Four: Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?

4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum does not align with the state standards; b) the school does not conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school does not regularly review scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) the sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas does not focus on core (prioritized) learning objectives; e) the staff lacks understanding and/or consensus as to how the curriculum documents and related program materials are used to effectively deliver instruction; f) there is a lack of programs and materials available to deliver the curriculum effectively.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum does not align with the state standards; b) the school does not conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school does not regularly review scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) the sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas does not focus on core (prioritized) learning objectives; e) the staff lacks understanding and/or consensus as to how the curriculum documents and related program materials are used to effectively deliver instruction; f) there is a lack of programs and materials available to deliver the curriculum effectively.
Meets standard	The school: a) curriculum aligns with the state standards; b) conducts systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school regularly reviews scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) has a sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas that is prioritized and focuses on the core learning objectives; e) the staff understands and uniformly uses curriculum documents and related program materials to effectively deliver instruction; f) programs and materials are available to deliver the curriculum effectively.

Focus group interviews with faculty revealed that the Irvington Community Middle School teachers each create individual class curriculum maps that are aligned to the Indiana State Standards. An examination of the curriculum maps provided by Mike McFadden, Director of Operations at ICMS, revealed that the maps are organized by month with the scope and sequence of each class noted. Each curriculum map notes the concepts, performance indicators (Indiana Standards) instructional strategies, formative and summative assessments, and primary resources and materials. From the curriculum map, teachers develop their units and weekly/daily lesson plans (indicator a).

Irvington Community Middle School is participating in the Teacher Advancement Program and many of their curriculum review and data practices arise from the practices of the TAP program. The ICMS staff uses an effective process to conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance (indicator b). At the start of the year, teachers submit their projected curriculum maps to the Director of Instruction, Loryn Venekamp, who posts them on the school's public drive, ensuring that all teachers have access to the curriculum maps of their colleagues. Throughout the school year teachers send the Ms. Venekamp quarterly updates on student performance, organized by the Indiana State Standards. These updates use a color-coding system to denote whether the standard has been taught and if students achieved mastery of that

standard. Specifically, if the standard was taught as planned and students achieved mastery based on assessments, the teachers color-code that standard in green. If the standard was taught as planned but the students did not achieve master based on assessments, the standard was color-coded in yellow, which will trigger the standard to be reviewed/revisited. If the standard was not taught as planned it was color-coded in and then moved to the following quarter where it will be addressed.

The teaching staff at Irvington Community Middle School regularly reviews the curriculum maps to ensure that all state standards are covered in time for testing (indicator c). The process described above ensures that all standards are taught in a timely fashion as the school year progresses, as do weekly grade-level meetings in which the staff has time to discuss and review curriculum maps and perform horizontal alignment within the grades. Finally, there are opportunities during summer professional development to review curriculum needs and ensure horizontal and vertical alignment between grades. Vertical alignment between grades also occurs in weekly TAP cluster meetings.

As part of the TAP program, ICMS staff engages with the student assessment data in order to prioritize and focus on core learning objectives across the curriculum (indicator d). An example of this practice can be seen in the adoption of the Cornell Note-Taking program at ICMS (and also at the Irvington Preparatory Academy). During the summer of 2011, the ICMS TAP Leadership Team developed school goals based on the spring 2011 ISTEP+ scores. An analysis of student ISTEP and NWEA MAP scores indicated that non-fiction text comprehension was a particular area of weakness for ICMS students. Based on this data, the TAP leadership team determined that the Cornell Note-Taking program would benefit students and implemented this program in the 2012-13 school year.

The teaching staff at Irvington Community Middle School understands and uniformly uses curriculum materials to effectively deliver instruction (indicator e). Focus group interviews and classroom observations revealed that the ICMS faculty is up to date on current educational best practices. The ICMS teaching staff was particularly engaged in the process of integrating classes across the curriculum, describing the cross-curricular offerings that integrate art and music into the more traditional areas of the curriculum.

The majority of classrooms observed contained the programs and materials to deliver the curriculum effectively (indicator f). There is a problem with outdated technology, as there is in Irvington Community Elementary School, with several teachers reporting that their classroom computers are not functioning, problems accessing the internet, and general issues with both the equipment and the technological infrastructure. The ICMS teaching staff noted that they were experiencing shortages in some program materials and supplies that they attributed to budgetary issues across the Irvington Community Schools as a whole. Some teachers noted that the budgetary difficulties have been improving.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Community Middle School offers student a high quality curriculum that is modified and adapted to provide the best educational content for students.

Irvington Community Middle School staff regularly engages in well-designed processes and procedures to ensure that the curriculum is up to date.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Preparatory Academy

Standard Four: Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?

4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum does not align with the state standards; b) the school does not conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school does not regularly review scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) the sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas does not focus on core (prioritized) learning objectives; e) the staff lacks understanding and/or consensus as to how the curriculum documents and related program materials are used to effectively deliver instruction; f) there is a lack of programs and materials available to deliver the curriculum effectively.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum does not align with the state standards; b) the school does not conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school does not regularly review scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) the sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas does not focus on core (prioritized) learning objectives; e) the staff lacks understanding and/or consensus as to how the curriculum documents and related program materials are used to effectively deliver instruction; f) there is a lack of programs and materials available to deliver the curriculum effectively.
Meets standard	The school: a) curriculum aligns with the state standards; b) conducts systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school regularly reviews scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) has a sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas that is prioritized and focuses on the core learning objectives; e) the staff understands and uniformly uses curriculum documents and related program materials to effectively deliver instruction; f) programs and materials are available to deliver the curriculum effectively.

Focus group interviews revealed that the curriculum used at the Irvington Preparatory Academy is currently aligned to the state standards, and the teaching staff reports that it is their common practice is to use the state standards as the basis for designing their curriculum maps (indicator a). IPA school leadership is provided with a copy of each curriculum map for each course offered at IPA, and these maps are reviewed by leadership to ensure that they are accurately aligned to the state standards. While a review of the curriculum maps provided by Ms. Pryor revealed that some curriculum maps were either missing or out of date, it is important to note that a site visit performed in the 2010-11 school year revealed that Irvington Preparatory Academy did not have complete curriculum maps for the majority of the courses offered. Ms. Pryor had made great strides in developing a set of expectations for the faculty that have led to the current curriculum maps being developed. Ms. Pryor reported that the process of reviewing and revising the maps to fill in gaps in student knowledge and to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment was begun in earnest in the 2012-13 academic year, and will continue into the upcoming school year.

The systematic review of the curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance (indicator b) is performed during TAP cluster meetings in order to identify the strategies that will be implemented throughout the school year and is also done at the departmental level throughout the year. The

regular review of the curriculum maps to ensure the presentation of content in time for testing is also done at the departmental level, but does not appear to be occurring at the school-wide level (indicator c). Consequently, the implementation of regular reviews of the curriculum maps, either to identify gaps or ensure presentation of content, primarily occurs within departments or among teachers who are in the same content area and want to work together. The teaching staff conveyed that they turn in curriculum maps and Ms. Pryor reviews them, but that there is no formal mechanism for feedback. Several members of the teaching staff conveyed the belief that the curriculum maps primary purpose was to serve as a guide for new faculty or for substitute teachers, rather than as a tool to ensure that content focuses on core learning objectives (indicator d). It should be noted that several staff members expressed the desire to engage in the process of reviewing the curriculum maps, examining vertical and horizontal articulation and working together to improve the curriculum. They noted as obstacles to this practice the lack of formal department meetings and of appointed departmental heads and the recent change from a trimester schedule to a semester schedule that led to the redesign of most of the courses. It should be noted that many departments at IPA have only one teacher in them, and none are larger than 5 staff members, and the addition of department heads could lead to a top-heavy structure, and that the teaching staff does have common preparation time to collaborate.

Through the TAP framework of student data analysis IPA staff and leadership identify the areas in need of improvement, which are then targeted through professional development and targeted teacher specific strategies. Irvington Preparatory is in the second year of TAP, and has many TAP procedures in place, such as the data wall, cluster meetings, effective TAP master teachers and a school-wide initiative in the Cornell Notes program. The majority of these procedures have been instituted, or drastically improved, within the last academic year. It has been acknowledged by both IPA school leadership and teaching staff that in the 2011-12 school year the implementation of TAP was not fully effective, predominantly due to a lack of fit between the demands of the TAP program and the skill sets of key staff members. These staff members have been replaced in the 2012-13 school year, and during discussions with Ms. Pryor, with the TAP master teachers at IPA, and with Mr. Nidiffer, it became clear that IPA is now moving forward in its implementation of the TAP process with great success. However, in many ways IPA is a “first-year” TAP school, with the teaching staff only beginning to internalize the philosophy and procedures of the TAP model.

Focus group interviews with Irvington Preparatory Academy staff revealed that they uniformly use curricular documents and materials to effectively deliver instruction (indicator e), with several staff members describing innovative projects and lessons that they have designed and implemented at IPA. As in the elementary and middle schools, there is a lack of access to technology and problems with the technology infrastructure (indicator f). IPA teachers have also noted a lack of up-to-date textbooks and materials to teach in their content areas.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Preparatory Academy is rapidly improving the implementation of the TAP program and with the strong leadership team currently in place this improvement should continue.

Recommendations: Engage the IPA teaching faculty in the process of curricular review and alignment, ideally through TAP data processes and procedures.

Irvington Community Elementary School

4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum is not implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is not focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery lacks the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities lack variety and/or limited use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) staff do not receive feedback on instructional practices.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum is not implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is not focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery lacks the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities lack variety and/or limited use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) staff do not receive feedback on instructional practices.
Meets standard	The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) the curriculum is implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery possesses the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities possess variety and/or use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) supplies sufficient feedback to staff on instructional practices.

Classroom observations revealed that the curriculum at Irvington Community Elementary School is implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design (indicator a), with all 13 out of 13 teachers observed followed the provided lesson plan. The lesson plans provided were all of very high quality, with the state standards to be covered clearly noted. Common Core standards were also noted on many curriculum plans. The amount of detail varied among the lesson plans, but all of the provided enough detail regarding the state standards being covered or the learning objectives for that day to be useful guiding documents. Many of the lesson plans were extremely detailed and very well done. It was also noted that all of the lesson plans contained core learning objectives in the form of “Students will be able to” (SWBAT). These core-learning objectives all aligned to the state standard being covered for that day.

Classroom observations also revealed that, as delivered, the majority of instruction is focused on core learning objectives (indicator b). As noted above, the majority of the lesson plans provided by the teacher who were observed did contain core-learning objectives, and the classroom observations revealed that 12 of the thirteen instructors did deliver a lesson focused on learning objectives. The classroom observations revealed that ten of the thirteen instructors observed gave lessons that posed a challenge to students and possessed the appropriate rigor (indicator c).

The instructors at ICES show a variety of different strategies in their teaching, including direct instruction, group work, project and problem-based learning, and leveled reading opportunities (indicator d). Nine out of thirteen instructors were observed differentiating instruction based on

student level or classroom data. One instructor differentiated the difficulty of a reading assignment for her class, while another provided drill work, multimedia, and also gave the students an opportunity to work as a team. This is a very high level of differentiation school-wide, and ICES leadership and staff are to be commended for their hard work in this area. Differentiating instruction has been one focus of professional development at ICES for the past few years and this emphasis is beginning to reap benefits. The success of the differentiated instruction focus is also reflected in the comments of the teaching staff, who noted during focus groups that they “have students with a lot of different levels in our classrooms... it may be a response to the kind of students we have.” Another noted, “all the different assessments allow us to measure exactly where they are and what they are ready to know... it helps to know how to move them.”

Teacher interviews noted that the school leaders provided regular feedback on their curriculum map and lesson plans, and Mrs. Lannan noted that she meets with the staff monthly by grade level to ensure that the curriculum is responsive to any changes that need to be made in response to student data (indicator e). These meetings also include a discussion of the Response to Intervention program that is being implemented at ICES. The content of lessons is monitored through a series of formal and informal classroom walkthroughs, with Mrs. Lannan performing two formal and 6 informal walkthroughs in the past academic year.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Community Elementary School has a strong teaching staff, who present rigorous and challenging content throughout the school.

Irvington Community Elementary School is data-driven. Teachers receive timely and accurate data regarding student performance, and they use that data in curricular planning.

School leadership conduct frequent classroom observations, and use that data to improve instruction.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Community Middle School

4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum is not implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is not focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery lacks the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities lack variety and/or limited use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) staff do not receive feedback on instructional practices.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum is not implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is not focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery lacks the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities lack variety and/or limited use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) staff do not receive feedback on instructional practices.
Meets standard	The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) the curriculum is implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery possesses the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities possess variety and/or use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) supplies sufficient feedback to staff on instructional practices.

Data for this standard is provided by classroom observations performed using the rubric provided by the Office of Education Innovation as well as observations performed by the Irvington Community Middle School TAP leadership team using the TAP Observation/Self Report Rubric provided by The National Institute for Excellence in Teaching. Alignment between these two rubrics was examined in the indicators for Instructional Plans (IP), Standards & Objectives (S&O), Lesson Structure & Pacing (LO), Assessment (AS), Respectful Culture (RC), Managing Student Behavior (MSB), Grouping Students (GRP), Teacher Knowledge of Students (TKS) and Problem-Solving (PS). Each of these indicators can be found on both rubrics and therefore serve as a valid point of comparison. In order to ensure that both sets of observers were objectively judging these indicators similarly, scores on the TAP Observation/Self-report rubric were compared to scores on the Office of Education Innovation rubric for six members of the teaching staff who were evaluated using both, with a score of 3 (proficient) or above on the TAP Observation/Self-report being equal to a “yes” judgment on the Office of Education Innovation rubric. Of the possible 54 datapoints, the two observations only disagreed in three instances, suggesting that the two rubrics were being applied in predominantly the same way.

Classroom observations using the rubric of the Office of Education Innovation revealed that the curriculum at Irvington Community Middle School is implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design (indicator a), with 7 out of 8 teachers observed followed the provided lesson plan (one lesson plan was not provided). The lesson plans provided were all of very high quality, with the state standards to be covered clearly noted. The amount of detail varied among the lesson plans, but all of the provided enough detail regarding the state standards being covered or the learning objectives for that day to be useful guiding documents. Many of the lesson plans were

extremely detailed and very well done. It was also noted that all of the lesson plans contained core learning objectives in the form of “Students will be able to” (SWBAT) or the equivalent. Analysis of the TAP Observation/Self Report Rubric revealed that all 15 teachers observed scored a 3 (proficient) or higher on the Instructional Plans indicator on the Observation/Self-report rubric.

Classroom observations also revealed that, as delivered, the majority of instruction is focused on core learning objectives (indicator b). As noted above, the majority of the lesson plans provided by the teacher who were observed did contain core-learning objectives, and the classroom observations revealed that seven of the eight instructors did deliver a lesson focused on learning objectives. The classroom observations revealed that five of the seven instructors observed gave lessons that posed a challenge to students and possessed the appropriate rigor (indicator c). Analysis of the TAP Observation/Self Report Rubric also revealed a high level of focus on core-learning objectives and lesson structure and pacing, with all 15 teachers scoring a 3 or above.

Classroom observations did not reveal a variety of different strategies in their teaching, with the bulk of classrooms observed using direct instruction to meet the varied interests, styles and learning needs of students (indicator d). However analysis of the TAP Observation/Self Report Rubric revealed that many lessons included differentiation as reflected in lesson structure and pacing and teacher knowledge of students indicators in the TAP Observation/Self-report rubric, all of the instructors observed scoring a 3 or above in these indicators. These indicators suggest that differentiation does occur in the classroom more often than was found during the site visit classroom observations.

Teacher interviews noted that the school leaders provided regular feedback on their curriculum map and lesson plans (indicator e). Mr. McFadden reported that he and Ms. Venekamp regularly review curriculum maps, with Ms. Venekamp reviewing them at least once each quarter.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Community Middle School is data-driven. Teachers receive timely and accurate data regarding student performance, and they use that data in curricular planning.

School leadership conduct frequent classroom observations, and use that data to improve instruction.

Recommendations: An additional focus on differentiating instruction to meet the needs of students with varied learning needs and abilities would be beneficial.

Irvington Preparatory Academy

4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum is not implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is not focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery lacks the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities lack variety and/or limited use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) staff do not receive feedback on instructional practices.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum is not implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is not focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery lacks the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities lack variety and/or limited use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) staff do not receive feedback on instructional practices.
Meets standard	The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) the curriculum is implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery possesses the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities possess variety and/or use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) supplies sufficient feedback to staff on instructional practices.

Data for this standard is provided by classroom observations performed using the rubric provided by the Office of Education Innovation as well as observations performed by the Irvington Preparatory Academy TAP leadership team using the TAP Observation/Self Report Rubric provided by The National Institute for Excellence in Teaching. Alignment between these two rubrics was examined in the indicators for Instructional Plans (IP), Standards & Objectives (S&O), Lesson Structure & Pacing (LO), Assessment (AS), Respectful Culture (RC), Managing Student Behavior (MSB), Grouping Students (GRP), Teacher Knowledge of Students (TKS), and Problem-Solving (PS). Each of these indicators can be found on both rubrics and therefore serve as a valid point of comparison. In order to ensure that both sets of observers were objectively judging these indicators similarly, scores on the TAP Observation/Self-report rubric were compared to scores on the Office of Education Innovation rubric for 8 members of the teaching staff who were evaluated using both, with a score of 3 (proficient) or above on the TAP Observation/Self-report being equal to a “yes” judgment on the Office of Education Innovation rubric. Of the possible 72 datapoints, the two observations disagreed in 9 instances, suggesting that the two rubrics were being applied in predominantly the same way.

Classroom observations using the rubric of the Office of Education Innovation revealed that the curriculum at Irvington Preparatory Academy is implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design (indicator a), with 5 out of 9 teachers observed followed the provided lesson plan (four lesson plans were not provided). An examination of lesson plans, which included lesson plans for the day from all staff (not just those who were observed) revealed that most of the lesson plans contained the state standards, student learning objectives, often in the form of SWBAT’s, and a lesson sequence. Many lesson plans also identified strategies and best practices for delivery of the

educational content. The quality and level of detail varied greatly among the lesson plans, with some including enough detail to serve as a guide to instruction and others containing very minimal content, lacking essential information such as the date the lesson plan is to be implemented. Analysis of the TAP Observation/Self Report Rubric revealed that seven out of eight teachers observed scored a 3 (proficient) or higher on the Instructional Plans indicator on the Observation/Self-report rubric, suggesting that the lesson plans did meet the metrics of the TAP program.

Classroom observations also revealed that, as delivered, that instruction is focused on core learning objectives (indicator b) in only four out of nine classrooms observed. Further, the classroom observations revealed that only two of the nine instructors observed gave lessons that posed a challenge to students and possessed the appropriate rigor (indicator c). Analysis of the TAP Observation/Self Report Rubric also revealed that many lessons lacked focus on core-learning objectives and lesson structure and pacing, with only five out of eight teachers scoring a 3 or above. These observations suggest that pacing and rigor are areas of needed improvement at Irvington Preparatory Academy, and that this is a weakness that has been identified through the TAP process.

Classroom observations did not reveal a variety of different strategies in teaching, with none of classrooms observed using differentiated instruction to meet the varied interests, styles and learning needs of students (indicator d). Analysis of the TAP Observation/Self Report Rubric also revealed that many lessons lacked differentiation as reflected in lesson structure and pacing and teacher knowledge of students indicators in the TAP Observation/Self-report rubric, with five out of eight instructors scoring a 2 or below in these indicators. It should be noted that the TAP rubric did reveal differentiation occurring in some classrooms.

As part of the TAP system, school leaders provided regular feedback to the staff on instructional practices, with the TAP master teachers available to provide input during cluster meetings, faculty meetings or in informal talks (indicator e). Further, a review of the TAP Observation/Self-report rubrics provided by IPA revealed that the feedback being given to the teaching staff through these observations is specific and useful to address any weaknesses in classroom teaching.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Preparatory Academy teachers receive regular feedback on teaching practices as part of TAP. This information is being effectively used to improve classroom practices at IPA.

Recommendations: Additional focus on ensuring that lesson plans are of a uniformly high quality and contain enough information to aid in quality instruction across the curriculum.

An additional focus on differentiating instruction to meet the needs of students with varied learning needs and abilities would be beneficial.

Irvington Preparatory Academy

4.3 For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support and preparation for post-secondary options?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in two or more of the following areas: a) the school's academic program lacks challenging coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement courses, internships, independent study) to prepare students for rigorous post-secondary opportunities; b) there is a lack of high expectations to motivate and prepare students for post-secondary academic opportunities; c) insufficient material resources and personnel guidance are available to inform students of post-secondary options; d) limited opportunities exist for extracurricular engagement and activities (e.g., athletics, academic clubs, vocational) to increase post-secondary options; e) the school does not meet Indiana Core 40 graduation standard requirements.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in one of the following areas: a) the school's academic program lacks challenging coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement courses, internships, independent study) to prepare students for rigorous post-secondary opportunities; b) there is a lack of high expectations to motivate and prepare students for post-secondary academic opportunities; c) insufficient material resources and personnel guidance are available to inform students of post-secondary options; d) limited opportunities exist for extracurricular engagement and activities (e.g., athletics, academic clubs, vocational) to increase post-secondary options; e) the school does not meet Indiana Core 40 graduation standard requirements.
Meets standard	The school: a) has challenging coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement courses, internships, independent study) to prepare students for rigorous post-secondary opportunities; b) has high expectations to motivate and prepare students for post-secondary academic opportunities; c) has sufficient material resources and personnel guidance available to inform students of post-secondary options; d) presents opportunities for extracurricular engagement and activities (e.g., athletics, academic clubs, vocational) to increase post-secondary options; e) meets or exceeds Indiana Core 40 graduation standard requirements.

Irvington Preparatory Academy offers both Advanced Placement courses as well as the opportunity to take dual credit courses through Ivy Tech and Indiana University, Bloomington (indicator a). In the 2013 school year, 70% of IPA graduates had earned at least one college credit and 50% had taken either an AP or a dual credit course. The faculty reports that the IPA curriculum is designed so that all students have the opportunity to earn an Academic Honors diploma at the end of their high school career (indicator e). The students all reported that they were challenged academically at Irvington Preparatory Academy, and that there were many opportunities to engage in challenging coursework. The students also reported that the majority of the classroom instructors had high expectations for their students and were encouraging them to pursue post-secondary academic opportunities (indicator b). Irvington Preparatory Academy goes above and beyond to ensure that students are aware of post-secondary options, and both encourages students to have high goals and celebrates their successes (indicator c). Poster size pictures of IPA graduates and their college options line the entryway at IPA, and college acceptance letters are proudly displayed in the cafeteria. IPA also provides staff dedicated to college counseling, plans school-wide college visits for all students, not just Juniors, at a frequency of 2 per year to 6 different universities (Manchester University, Indiana University, Taylor University, Purdue University, Ball State University, and Franklin College) and ACT prep sessions that is offered as a full semester course.

Irvington Preparatory Academy also provides a wealth of extracurricular activities to increase post-secondary options (indicator d). Irvington Preparatory Academy offers a variety of athletics, including track, soccer, volleyball, basketball and cross-country, as well as academic clubs such as the National Honors Society, Spanish Club, German Club, the student newspaper and the Writing Club. IPA also offers some unique club opportunities that came about through the initiative of the students themselves, in partnership with teacher/sponsors: Travel Club, Anime Club, Do Something Club (service club), Etiquette Club, Key Club (Girl Scout Service Club), Gay-Straight Alliance and Magic, the Gathering, Club.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Preparatory Academy encourages and celebrates their students in their higher-education goals.

Irvington Preparatory Academy provides strong supports for students' secondary education goals throughout all four years of high school.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Community Elementary School

4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are not accurate or useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are not received by classroom teachers in a timely or useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments lack sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is limited frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are not used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are not accurate or useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are not received by classroom teachers in a timely or useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments lack sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is limited frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are not used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.
Meets standard	The school: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are accurate and useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are received by classroom teachers in a timely and useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments have sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is sufficient frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.

Irvington Community Elementary School administers standardized and classroom assessments that are accurate and useful measures of established learning standards/objectives (indicator a), and are administered with sufficient frequency to inform instructional decisions effectively (indicator d). Specifically, at the school-wide level, ICES administers the Northwest Education Association Measures of Academic Progress three times a year in addition to yearly ISTEP testing. Additional state testing includes the IREAD-3 and IREAD K-2. Additional assessments used are Fountas and Pinnell Benchmarks, which are administered 3 times a year and monitored by the Title 1 team, SuccessMaker, as well as a full complement of regular classroom assessments.

Teachers noted in the focus group that the data is disseminated quickly by the Technology Coordinator, Jennifer Woo, and presented in a way that is useful for differentiating instruction and determining student weaknesses (indicator b). Preliminary NWEA RIT scores are presented and recorded at the end of each testing session, and Ms. Woo uploads NWEA test results every afternoon of testing. RIT score data and reports are available on the NWEA Reports Site the following day. Classroom teachers are provided with an NWEA binder with information and resources, that is updated with data and reports following each testing season. Lastly, SuccessMaker Math and Reading reports are available at all times.

The assessments administered at ICES display a sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of learning abilities (indicator c). Of particular note is the ICES teaching staff's skill with NWEA Reports – with teachers reporting that they often disaggregated data in each goal area of Reading, Language Usage, and Mathematics into specific skills. The use of the SuccessMaker program also allows the teaching staff to access data as well as serves as a guide to differentiating lessons for individual students, meeting them at the level of their academic ability.

Assessment results are often used to guide instruction or make adjustments to the curriculum (indicator e). Interviews with Mrs. Lannan revealed that she is very knowledgeable regarding the NWEA MAP and uses the data from this assessment, as well as the Fountas & Pinnell data, to modify the curriculum when needed. Mrs. Lannan noted that they use the NWEA to benefit individual students, the August and January data to aid planning for class assignments, identifying students at risk who may need support from the Title 1 team, and to provide continuous data regarding individual student progress. As was described by a classroom teacher, “we are very nimble with the students and we try different things... we use the data to respond to the needs of our students. It’s working and it’s a lot of work, but it comes out of what we are willing to do as a group, we are willing to try and to adapt.”

Areas of Strength: Irvington Community Elementary School uses a wide-variety of standardized and classroom based assessments, and disseminate the data quickly and in a useful manner to the teaching staff.

Irvington Community Elementary School skillfully uses standardized assessment data to improve instruction at the school-wide curricular level and also at the student-level.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Community Middle School

4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are not accurate or useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are not received by classroom teachers in a timely or useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments lack sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is limited frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are not used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are not accurate or useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are not received by classroom teachers in a timely or useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments lack sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is limited frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are not used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.
Meets standard	The school: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are accurate and useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are received by classroom teachers in a timely and useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments have sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is sufficient frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.

Irvington Community Middle School uses a variety of assessment techniques to establish learning standards and to ensure that educational objectives are being met (indicator a). ICMS administer ISTEP once a year, and administers the NWEA MAP to measure student academic growth three times a year, providing sufficient frequency of testing to inform instructional decisions effectively (indicator d). Additional testing occurs at the level of each individual grade, often guided by the TAP processes and procedures. For example, teachers reported that the math department has used additional testing to ensure that students' knowledge of algebra is appropriate for 6th and 7th grade math content, offering remediation when necessary and giving an algebra readiness test to see if they are ready for Pre-Algebra or Algebra depending upon grade level. Finally, the state standards and overall course objectives are posted in each room, and teachers create their own assessments and adjust teaching to meet these standards and objectives.

One of the strengths of the TAP program is the effective use of data to drive instruction, and as a TAP school Irvington Community Middle School has efficiently utilized these procedures to ensure that assessment results are received by classroom teachers in a timely and useful manner (indicator b). Specifically, data from standardized tests are distributed through cluster meetings, with most of the data being available to the classroom teacher within a week of administration. The classroom teachers report that they make a particular effort to grade internal assessments

quickly and used that data to adjust classroom instruction. Classroom assessments are designed with sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities (indicator c), with the teachers noting that they work to use a variety of assessment techniques such as standard exam formats, true/false and multiple choice, as well as using project-based exercises, writing prompts and exit passes. They noted that the use of exit passes was particularly helpful in that they are graded immediately and give timely data regarding a student's comprehension level. This data can then be used to make adjustments to the classroom instruction. Ms. Venekamp also relates that the ISTEP data is used by Mr. McFadden, herself and the TAP mentor teachers to determine the overall school goals for the following year. As Ms. Venekamp recounts, this process led to a focus on increasing students' summarizing of nonfiction skills, which led to the current focus on Cornell Notes.

The results of the assessments employed by the ICMS staff are then used to guide and adjust the curriculum (indicator e). Specifically, the results of NWEA testing are used to determine student placement in either advanced or remediation classes, such as "Mathletes" for students who are capable of advance mathematics and critical thinking classes for students in need of more instruction. NWEA MAP results are further used to determine ability grouping in the classroom, tutoring, assignment differentiation, and classroom curriculum. The teaching staff reports that assessment data is also used during team meetings to align curriculum, during cluster meetings to guide the adjustment of curriculum, and during professional development to align curriculum within grades and across subject areas.

One of the beneficial aspects of the Irvington Community Schools organization is the opportunity to coordinate and share information about students between the three schools. An example of this type of coordination lies in the sharing of student data between the elementary and middle school. Current practice between the two schools is to share student achievement data from the elementary school with the middle school, which is then used to build the student's schedule in advance of fall matriculation. Not only are there no delays at the beginning of the school year, but the schedules developed fits the current needs of the student. This communication also occurs between the high school and the middle school, with student assessment data being shared with high school leadership in order to best place students in advanced courses or, when necessary, provide remediation.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Community Middle School uses a wide-variety of standardized and classroom-based assessments, and disseminates the data quickly and in a useful manner to the teaching staff.

Irvington Community Middle School skillfully uses standardized assessment data to improve instruction at the school-wide curricular level.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Preparatory Academy

4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are not accurate or useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are not received by classroom teachers in a timely or useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments lack sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is limited frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are not used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are not accurate or useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are not received by classroom teachers in a timely or useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments lack sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is limited frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are not used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.
Meets standard	The school: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are accurate and useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are received by classroom teachers in a timely and useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments have sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is sufficient frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.

Irvington Preparatory Academy administers End of Course Assessments (ECA's) as well as the ACT PLAN/EXPLORE standardized test, with additional classroom assessments are administered by classroom instructors (indicator a). ACT PLAN/EXPLORE is taken in fall and spring (indicator d) and the results of these tests are made available to faculty to incorporate into curricular review. Focus group interviews with the IPA teaching staff revealed, however, that the current set of assessments were not meeting their data needs. Specifically, the format of ACT PLAN/EXPLORE data as delivered to the school is difficult to use to determine performance at the student level. School-wide data is disaggregated at IPA leading to a delay in the teachers receiving the data they need (indicator b). When asked about the ACT PLAN/EXPLORE data, one teacher replied "it's not helpful and it's not quick."

End of course assessments and the ACT PLAN/EXPLORE provide data regarding established learning standards/objectives, but do not offer a variety of assessment formats, with both assessments being standardized tests. The teaching staff at IPA do provide a variety of assessments to help guide instruction for a wide range of learning abilities (indicator c), describing assessments such as hands on activities, homework, quizzes, projects, games (e.g., "Jeopardy") as well as formal assessments through tests and essays. IPA staff report that quizzes are usually given at least once a week and that "Bell work" and "exit tickets" are used frequently and serve as checks on day-to-day progress. Further, English 10 teachers benchmark test throughout the semester and adjust accordingly, and students are placed in classes for ECA remediation if they are required to retake the

test. IPA also offers "Math Lab" and "Language Arts Lab" as full semester courses for remediation for those exams.

An example of IPA using assessment results to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum can be seen in the “mastery-based” Algebra 1 curriculum. In order to prepare the students for the Algebra ECA, the course is divided into four sections. Before moving on to the next section, the student must show mastery of the material by scoring 70% or higher on the classroom assessments. This student-centered strategy to improve performance on the ECA’s has already resulted in an increase in students passing the end of course assessment.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Preparatory Academy is using assessment data in innovative way to ensure that their students pass the state mandated end of course assessment.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Community Schools

4.5. Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) hiring processes are not organized to support the success of new staff members; b) inefficient or insufficient deployment of faculty and staff limits instructional time and capacity; c) faculty and staff are not certified/trained in areas to which they are assigned; d) professional development (PD) does not relate to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement; e) PD is not determined through analyses of student attainment and improvement; f) the teacher evaluation plan is not explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) hiring processes are not organized to support the success of new staff members; b) inefficient or insufficient deployment of faculty and staff limits instructional time and capacity; c) faculty and staff are not certified/trained in areas to which they are assigned; d) professional development (PD) does not relate to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement; e) PD is not determined through analyses of student attainment and improvement; f) the teacher evaluation plan is not explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria.
Meets standard	The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) hiring processes are organized and used to support the success of new staff members; b) the school deploys sufficient number of faculty and staff to maximize instructional time and capacity; c) faculty and staff are certified/trained in areas to which they are assigned; d) professional development (PD) is related to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement; e) PD opportunities are determined through analyses of student attainment and improvement; f) the teacher evaluation plan is explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria.

Irvington Community Schools, Inc. has developed consistent hiring practices across our three schools to ensure that all new hires are fully qualified and have been approved by several members of the ICS management team.

After an open position is posted on the Department of Education's Job Bank as well as advertised internally, candidates submit a cover letter and resume as well as a copy of their Indiana Teaching License (for teaching positions). All submissions are then reviewed and a group of candidates are selected for phone interviews. Generally, two staff members participate in the phone interview process and collaborate to decide which candidates will be called for face-to-face interviews. The first face-to-face interview is conducted with at least two staff members, usually a member of the management team and a member of the teaching staff from the department in which there is an opening. After all face-to-face interviews have been completed; the interviewing team then makes a recommendation for which candidates should be called for a second face-to-face interview. The second face-to-face interview takes place with at least two staff members, including at least one member of the Senior Management Team. Once all second round face-to-face interviews have been completed, all interviewers then collaborate to make a decision on offering the position to a candidate. The candidate's would-be direct supervisor then calls at least one professional reference before the position is formally offered.

This hiring process is used by all three ICS schools, and provides a framework to ensure that teachers hired using this process are a good fit within the Irvington Community Schools.

Irvington Community Elementary School

New teacher mentoring at Irvington Community Elementary School consists of each new teacher being assigned a mentor to meet with them and to help them become familiar with ICES expectations. Plans for the 2013-2014 school year include the elementary school formalizing their mentorship program by having a teacher certified in mentoring through Marian University manage the program. This new staff member will mentor brand new teachers and she will assign a “buddy” teacher to experienced teachers that are new to ICS (indicator a).

All teachers at the Irvington Community Elementary School are certified or credentialed in their teaching area, or have the appropriate licensure to teach (substandard c). All teachers at Irvington Community Schools must not only be licensed to teach in their subject area in the state of Indiana, but also must meet the state’s requirements for Highly Qualified Teachers. The Highly Qualified Teacher Verification Form must be completed by all teaching candidates, along with supporting documentation, and kept in the employee’s personnel file. The teachers are teaching course loads that are manageable, and the various staff members have distinct roles (substandard b). Overall, the staff is deployed to best utilize their skills and training.

Professional development is related to the demonstrated needs for instructional improvement and is based on the analysis of assessment data (indicators d & e), with ICES using assessment data from NWEA, ISTEP and Fountas & Pinnell to guide their professional development decisions. These assessments revealed that students at Irvington Community Elementary School would benefit from additional instruction in writing, comprehension of nonfiction text, computation, and problem solving skills. Based on this analysis, ICES leadership decided in the 2011-12 school year to incorporate Singapore Math strategies into the curriculum to improve both computation and problem solving skills. The school also identified the Smekens Writing Workshop and Smekens Literacy Centers methods as tools to help improve student achievement in both writing and reading. Both of these programs have continued into the 2012-13 school year.

Irvington Community Elementary School staff is evaluated using the Performance Management Rubric. The current plan calls for two formal and 6-8 informal classroom observations to be performed, however, Mrs. Lannan reports that she is able to perform two formal and 6 informal walkthroughs in the course of a year. Walkthrough observations are sent via email within an hour of their completion and each walkthrough contains a reflective question that the teachers are required to respond to. Formal observations are delivered using a post observation conference within 2 days of the observation.

Mrs. Lannan is currently in the process of revising the teacher evaluation system using relevant tools from the Indiana RISE teacher evaluation system and the TAP system that is being

implemented at ICMS an IPA. The stated goal for the upcoming academic year is to perform four formal classroom observations, with 2 of these announced and 2 unannounced.

Irvington Community Middle School and Irvington Preparatory Academy

All teachers at the Irvington Community Middle School and Irvington Preparatory Academy are certified or credentialed in their teaching area, or have the appropriate licensure to teach (substandard c). The teachers are teaching course loads that are manageable, and the various staff members have distinct roles (substandard b). Overall, the staff is deployed to best utilize their skills and training.

Irvington Community Middle School and Irvington Preparatory Academy both participate in TAP. This program is a robust teacher evaluation and professional development framework for schools. Professional development is driven by the TAP focus on student assessment data and is related to demonstrated need for instructional improvement (indicator e).

TAP also provides a comprehensive teacher evaluation framework that is currently being implemented at both schools (indicator f). The methodology behind TAP is to formally evaluate teachers four times per year, two announced observations and two unannounced evaluations. The career teacher and evaluator meet after each observation to review the lesson and discuss an area of reinforcement (something that went well) and an area of refinement (something that needs improved). The evaluator coaches the teacher on how to improve and provides the teacher a research-based strategy to help improve the area of refinement. Coaching and follow-up are provided by the master and mentor teachers to the career teachers on a consistent basis to improve instructional practice.

Another component of TAP is weekly professional development through Cluster meetings. The school determines an academic goal for the year based on standardized testing data. The teaching strategies addressed in cluster meetings are to help work towards student improvement in the school goal that was determined using testing data. The cluster meetings occur weekly during which the strategy is presented to the staff by the master and mentor teachers. The career teachers then implement the strategy in their classrooms and report back to cluster how the implementation is proceeding. The master and mentor teachers follow-up with the career teachers by observing, modeling, or co-teaching the strategy in the classroom to ensure that the career teacher understands the concept and is implementing it effectively in the classroom.

Teachers at the Irvington Community Middle School report that they also meet 3 days per year for non-TAP related professional development, in addition to several days of orientation at the beginning of the school year. All of the ICMS teaching staff returned for the 2012-13 school year, a fact that the teaching staff celebrates. They noted that staff retention has allowed them to become “more unified and consistent—we’ve learned from the last year and we are making changes.” They also noted that in the past new teachers were given orientation and guidance from the school.

When asked about the TAP process, the majority of responses from members of the teaching staff conveyed that some original confusion, and perhaps ambivalence, toward the process is being replaced by an understanding of how TAP functions and an appreciation for the structure and transparency it provides. One teacher noted that “now I understand more from the rubric and I get more information—they are asking questions that are better.” Another noted, “we always had walkthroughs and the difference now is consistency. We have more critique and more data to look at to make things better. It is frustrating sometimes because it takes so much time.” As noted in this comment, the most common concern with TAP at ICMS is the amount of time it takes to implement the program.

Teachers at the Irvington Preparatory Academy report that they have four “teacher work days,” two days a year of professional development, six days of orientation at the start of the year, in addition to the work being done within the TAP framework, which is considerable. Teachers also state that there are funds available to participate in professional development opportunities specific to their content areas. Irvington Preparatory Academy staff engagement in the TAP process is steadily increasing. Staff members noted that their experiences in the previous year with TAP had not been overwhelmingly positive, but several noted that this year is better. Several main concerns with the TAP program were still expressed, with one concern expressed regarding the different levels of usefulness of the TAP system for different content areas—with some areas seeming a better fit for the focus on student assessment data and the aspects of teaching valued by the TAP Observation rubric. An additional concern with TAP is in regard to the implementation of the school-wide initiative of Cornell Notes, and its appropriateness for all content areas.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Community Schools use a very thorough and effective process to interview and select new members of the teaching staff.

Student achievement data is used effectively by all three schools to determine professional development needs.

Implementation of the TAP system at ICMS and IPA have led to an effective and well documented teacher evaluation being in place.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Community Schools

4.6. Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>both</u> of the following areas: a) significant disagreements exist among stakeholders about the school's mission; b) there is a lack of widespread knowledge and commitment to the intentions of the school's mission.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) significant disagreements exist among stakeholders about the school's mission; b) there is a lack of widespread knowledge and commitment to the intentions of the school's mission.
Meets standard	The school: a) has a mission that is shared by all stakeholders; b) has stakeholders possessing widespread knowledge and commitment to the intentions of the school's mission.

The school's mission statement is reflective of the commitment to provide a small, safe learning community that is committed to a college preparatory curriculum that prepares students for success post secondary experiences. Embedded within the mission statement are the core values of The Irvington Way, the school's character education manifesto. Those values include respect, responsibility, safety, involvement, and focus. Teachers and students commit to following The Irvington Way as par of maintaining a learning environment that promotes success for all students. The Irvington Way weaves a theme of personal commitment through all three schools that starts in kindergarten and carries through with them to their post secondary experiences. Throughout the interviews with teachers, students and parents the Irvington Way was noted as being part of the mission, but was not the only aspect of the mission noted. All stakeholders interviewed cited the focus on providing students with a quality education from K-12, a focus on higher education as a goal, and a commitment to educating the whole child by providing instruction in art, music and language (indicator a).

Interviews with two members of the Board of Directors revealed that, like the other stakeholders interviewed, the Board possesses widespread knowledge and commitment to the intentions of the mission of the Irvington Community Schools (indicator b). The Board Members revealed a remarkable knowledge of the day-to-day activities of the school and note that felt that the communication between the ICS school leaders and the Board were effective, accurate and useful. Both Board members discussed the school mission with knowledge and passion, noting the role of the ICS schools in the life of the Irvington neighborhood.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Community Schools have a compelling mission that is instantiated daily in the life of all three ICS schools.

The Board of Directors of the Irvington Community School is engaged and knowledgeable about the live of the ICS schools.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Community Elementary School

4.7. Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address them: a) The school does not have clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach does not possess high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are disrespectful and/or unsupportive and there are non-existing or unclear processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are unprofessional and/or unproductive.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address it: a) The school does not have clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach does not possess high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are disrespectful and/or unsupportive and there are non-existing or unclear processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are unprofessional and /or unproductive.
Meets standard	The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) the school has clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach possesses high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are respectful and supportive and faculty and students are clear about processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are professional and constructive.

Irvington Community Elementary School has a clearly stated set of behavioral rules that enforce positive behavior in *The Irvington Way* (indicator a). The tenets of the Irvington Way are recited daily during announcements, are posted in every classroom, and are part of the Irvington Way Family contract that state the expectations for teachers, parents, and students and are signed by all parties at the beginning of each school year. The role of the Irvington Way in the culture of ICES cannot be overstated—as noted by one teacher “the founders of ICS established a culture of respect and we have kept it that way.” This culture of respect flows through all aspects of the behavior of students, staff and parents. For example, each student at ICES has an ICS folder and/or agenda book containing school policies and rules that are sent home nightly. Finally, behavior sheets are sent home each Friday for parents to sign and return that reinforce the importance of following school rules. In addition to enforcing the Irvington Way throughout the school day, ICES also uses a system of positive behavior management that provides high expectations for student behavior (indicator b). Positive behavior management at ICES includes the practice of focusing on one character trait per month with the school counselor visiting each class during the month to teach the character trait. ICES also rewards positive behavior with the “Lighthouse Leader” program. Lighthouse Leaders are chosen weekly from each class based on the current character trait. These students receive a prize, and pictures are posted in the front office. Interviews with student revealed that they value the position of “Lighthouse Leader” very highly and work to win the title. Finally, students can earn “Character Cards” for exemplifying the current character trait and names of students who earn “Character Cards” are announced daily on the announcements.

In those instances in which a behavior is unmanageable or serious enough to require third-party intervention, a teacher may refer that student to the Director of School Climate (Behavior Coach) by filling out a Behavior Referral Form. The Behavior Coach then investigates the situation, meets with

the student, contacts the parents, and assigns consequences as necessary. Parents are informed through Referral Tracking sheets. Finally, Behavior Referral Board meetings are used when a student shows a pattern of inappropriate behavior. The parents and student meet with the Behavior Referral Board Team to discuss the behaviors and collaborate on solutions. In some cases, individual student behavior contracts are made by the team to differentiate behavior goals for students who are at risk-- the goal being to raise expectations as behavior improves and notice trends. Each month, the Behavior Coach compiles the referral data and creates a report for the faculty and staff. The data is analyzed to look for trends and areas of weakness in behavior management.

Classroom observations, informal conversations, and focus group interviews with parents, teachers, students and school leadership reveals a school community that is respectful and supportive of each other. Interactions between faculty and students were observed to be respectful and supportive (indicator c), with all of the classroom observations revealing that interactions between faculty and students were respectful. Further, interactions between faculty and the administration were reported by the teaching staff to be professional and constructive.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Community Elementary School provides students with an easily understood and well-implemented discipline policy in the Irvington Way.

Positive behavior supports are in place to encourage good behavior rather than punish bad behavior. However, should it be necessary to move beyond the positive behavioral supports offered by ICES, there is a well designed behavior management process in place.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Community Middle School

4.7. Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address them: a) The school does not have clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach does not possess high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are disrespectful and/or unsupportive and there are non-existing or unclear processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are unprofessional and/or unproductive.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address it: a) The school does not have clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach does not possess high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are disrespectful and/or unsupportive and there are non-existing or unclear processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are unprofessional and /or unproductive.
Meets standard	The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) the school has clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach possesses high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are respectful and supportive and faculty and students are clear about processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are professional and constructive.

Staff and leadership at ICMS ensure that the school has clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior through the use of the passport program, which rewards students who exhibit the behaviors of the Irvington Way (indicators a & b). This program offers incentives such as field trips, public recognition, gift cards, homework passes, and bonus points to students who collect signatures of staff for academic behaviors that affect the individual and their academic progress. The Irvington Way is a common set of behavior principles that begin in the elementary school and carry through to the Irvington Preparatory Academy. To reinforce positive choices, students recite the Irvington Way each morning, as well as it being posted in each and every class.

Through positive behaviors, students earn the opportunity to participate in pep rallies and various assemblies throughout the year. The ideas of The Irvington Way require that students and staff live up to high expectations in their behavior. Students, parents, and teachers are all made aware of the behavior rubric. Additionally, the Student Handbook includes a bullying policy, an attendance policy is outlined, general policies and procedures for behavior, classroom management, behavior coaching, and community management. Finally, there are plans to include a detailed outline of the minor incident program in the 2012-13 student handbook.

Although students have been guided by the tenets of the Irvington Way since elementary school, the staff at ICSM provides additional support for students as they enter middle school. The staff conducts a series of meetings with incoming 6th graders outlining expectations, policies, and behavior management, as well as school tours for prospective students, which includes an outlining of the expectations, policies, and behavior management of the middle school. Finally, ICMS students are held to high expectations is through Academic, Attendance, and Behavior referral boards.

Interactions between faculty and students were observed to be respectful and supportive (indicator c), with students reporting during focus group interviews that they felt safe at their school and that, as one student noted, the teachers all “care about me and they’re available for the students.”

Interactions between faculty and administration at Irvington Community Middle School are professional and constructive (indicator d). In fact, during the discussion of faculty/administration interactions, the teaching staff conveyed that the quality of the professional relationships at ICMS and through to the entire Irvington Community Schools leadership is one reason why the retention rate is 100%. As one teacher noted, “The bosses care about us and they are fighting for us...they go to bat for us and will support us.” Another noted, “ here we get support from the parents and from the leadership.. we feel more of a community here and not just a school.” Finally, one teacher stated “I feel so at home and I don’t want to go anywhere else. I am comfortable with who I teach with and who my students are.”

Areas of Strength: Irvington Community Middle School provides students with an easily understood and well-implemented discipline policy in the Irvington Way.

Interactions between the staff and school leadership are particularly beneficial and have led to 100% retention rate among the teaching staff.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Preparatory Academy

4.7. Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address them: a) The school does not have clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach does not possess high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are disrespectful and/or unsupportive and there are non-existing or unclear processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are unprofessional and/or unproductive.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address it: a) The school does not have clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach does not possess high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are disrespectful and/or unsupportive and there are non-existing or unclear processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are unprofessional and /or unproductive.
Meets standard	The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) the school has clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach possesses high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are respectful and supportive and faculty and students are clear about processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are professional and constructive.

Irvington Preparatory Academy has clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior in the form of the Irvington Way, which is posted in all classrooms and recited at the start of the school day (indicator a). The Irvington Way is also the basis for the Freshman Behavior Talks and is integrated into advisory curriculum. Further, incoming families meet with Behavior Coaches to discuss the Irvington Way and The Irvington Way is published in Student Handbook. Finally, individual teachers provide students with syllabi with the classroom rules clearly stated.

The school's discipline policy is focused on encouraging positive behavior (Behavior Coaches rather than Dean of Discipline, etc) and at-risk students are given opportunities for character development in and outside of the school building and school day (Boys to Men, Ropes Course, Etiquette Club, Manners for Men). Positive reinforcement is also used in the form of Raven of the Week, Academic Awards, Travel Club, and the National Honor Society (indicator b). Interactions between faculty and students were observed to be respectful and supportive (indicator c), with students conveying during focus group interviews that the rules and processes around the behavior plan were clear and well understood. The topic of school climate at Irvington Preparatory Academy began a lively conversation during focus group interviews, with the staff noting the positive changes that have occurred to bring about a school culture that is valued by students and faculty. Faculty noted that "school culture has hit a critical mass and students are coming forward with concerns," and "the students are the "antenna" and are giving us early warning." Another described a session from the Peace Learning Center that led to valuable discussions among the students, while another noted that "we feel like we have turned a corner and with students who show up we are quicker to intervene and help them succeed.... We have amped up the academic compliance program and require them to go for tutoring and if they don't they can be gone..." Finally, it was noted that "we are now more of a team and we will work together... the kids aren't getting any traction with misbehavior."

Areas of Strength: Irvington Preparatory Academy provides students with a safe and effective environment in which to learn. IPA has shown great improvement in the design and implementation of its behavior plan.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Community Elementary School

4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) there is a lack of active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) school communication is neither timely nor relevant to the parental concerns; c) student academic progress and achievement reports are not clearly reported and/or misunderstood; d) the school's communication methods are not well-designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., not communicating in parents' native languages, communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at inconvenient times for parents).
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) there is a lack of active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) school communication is neither timely nor relevant to the parental concerns; c) student academic progress and achievement reports are not clearly reported and/or misunderstood; d) the school's communication methods are not well-designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., not communicating in parents' native languages, communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at inconvenient times for parents).
Meets standard	The school: a) has active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) utilizes communications that are both timely and relevant to the parental concerns; c) communicates student academic progress and achievement in reports that are understood by parents; d) the school's communication methods are designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., communicating in parents' native languages, not communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at convenient times for parents).

Irvington Community Elementary School has active and ongoing communication between the school and parents (indicator a), with the teaching staff using a variety of ways to communicate with parents. These communications take the form of school newsletters, classroom newsletters from each teacher, behavior reports sent home daily or weekly, parent-teacher conferences held four times a year, phone messenger systems, emails, phone calls and face to face discussion during pick up and drop off. ICES teachers are required to communicate with parents at least once every two weeks to discuss behavior, academics, or any other concerns. Many teachers are also able to meet with parents during dismissal times (3, 3:20 & 4) so there is constant dialogue between teacher/parent. All of this activity is recorded in the communication log that is turned in at the end of the year (indicator b).

Irvington Community Elementary School communicates student academic progress and achievement in reports that are understood by parents through parent/teacher conferences in which teachers explain grades and test results from NWEA, Fountas and Pinnell and ISTEP. Additionally, progress reports are sent home at a minimum of once per quarter and some teachers choose to communicate with parents more frequently, providing parents with a steady flow of information. Finally, parents can access their students' grades on Powerschool.

The school's communication methods are designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (indicator d), with many school materials translated into Spanish. Further, teachers offer extended times to meet with parents during conference week, or will come into school early, schedule meetings during school hours and after hours.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Community Elementary School staff is friendly and responsive to parents, providing them with a information about their students through a variety of different modes of communication.

Recommendations: None at this time.

Irvington Community Middle School

4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) there is a lack of active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) school communication is neither timely nor relevant to the parental concerns; c) student academic progress and achievement reports are not clearly reported and/or misunderstood; d) the school's communication methods are not well-designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., not communicating in parents' native languages, communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at inconvenient times for parents).
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) there is a lack of active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) school communication is neither timely nor relevant to the parental concerns; c) student academic progress and achievement reports are not clearly reported and/or misunderstood; d) the school's communication methods are not well-designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., not communicating in parents' native languages, communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at inconvenient times for parents).
Meets standard	The school: a) has active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) utilizes communications that are both timely and relevant to the parental concerns; c) communicates student academic progress and achievement in reports that are understood by parents; d) the school's communication methods are designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., communicating in parents' native languages, not communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at convenient times for parents).

The ICMS staff employs a wide variety of communication methods to ensure that the communication between parents and the school are frequent and useful. Examples such as a weekly school newsletter, weekly grade level newsletters, daily homework emails, weekly tutoring notices, and weekly missing assignment slips provide parents with timely and accurate information regarding their student's progress.

Additional correspondences such as the school website, Facebook and Twitter sites ensure that all possible social media are being used to communicate with parents. Finally, Powerschool communication, teacher/club blogs, quarterly parent/teacher phone conference logs as well as weekly progress reports, quarterly student led-conferences, club newsletters and informational letters, culture team/grade level team brochures, yearly calendar and events calendar and academic passports ensure that the parents are fully aware of their student's progress. To ensure that the parents fully understand the information being provided NWEA results are graphed and explained, relevant comments are made on report cards, and goal letters for ISTEP are sent out prior to testing. Finally, parents are required to sign academic agendas and report cards.

In those instances when behavioral issues arise, parents are kept fully informed through behavioral phone conferences for each major incident, concern letters/phone contact, teacher concern/personal emails, and daily behavior logs for assigned students. Communication with special education parents is particularly important, so ICMS staff ensure that there is a special education parent contact, regular special education progress reports and that the special education conferences are set up at parent convenience.

Finally, additional communication occurs through weekly grade level curriculum letter, the availability of classroom syllabi, general progress reports as well as testing (NWEA) letter results, academic opportunity letters for 21st Century Scholars, Parent Surveys, automated all call messages for parents and convenient parent scheduling of student led conferences during assigned days. Finally, ICMS reaches out to parents through the use of enrollment forms in Spanish, bilingual phone conferences, meetings arranged at parents' convenience for behavior or special needs, and academic student-led conferences.

Irvington Community Middle School engages in a variety of communication and outreach methods to engage parents in the life of the school. One aspect of parent engagement that is lacking, however, is a fully functioning Parent-School organization. There is currently an effort underway to form a PTSA that encompasses both middle school and high school parents. At the time of the site visit a vote had been taken to combine the two organizations, but the actual joining of the two groups had not happened. Mr. McFadden stated that the goal of this new PTSA is to "see the PTSA come to common goal to support the schools."

Areas of Strength: Irvington Community Middle School staff is friendly and responsive to parents, providing them with information about their students through a variety of different modes of communication.

Recommendations: Continue working to establish an active PTSA.

Irvington Preparatory Academy

4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) there is a lack of active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) school communication is neither timely nor relevant to the parental concerns; c) student academic progress and achievement reports are not clearly reported and/or misunderstood; d) the school's communication methods are not well-designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., not communicating in parents' native languages, communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at inconvenient times for parents).
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) there is a lack of active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) school communication is neither timely nor relevant to the parental concerns; c) student academic progress and achievement reports are not clearly reported and/or misunderstood; d) the school's communication methods are not well-designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., not communicating in parents' native languages, communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at inconvenient times for parents).
Meets standard	The school: a) has active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) utilizes communications that are both timely and relevant to the parental concerns; c) communicates student academic progress and achievement in reports that are understood by parents; d) the school's communication methods are designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., communicating in parents' native languages, not communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at convenient times for parents).

The Irvington Preparatory Academy staff employs a wide variety of communication methods to ensure that the communication between parents and the school are frequent and useful (indicator a). IPA provides a weekly school newsletter and School Messenger is used by the leadership team to keep parents updated on events, activities, and concerns with the school, as well as to alert parents if their child is tardy, absent, etc. The school website is available for calendar and announcements. Email with any teacher is easily accessible through the school website and because all teachers have a uniform email address (indicator b).

Powerschool, the online gradebook, is available for all parents and students to view attendance, grades, and teacher comments at any time (indicator c). IPA uses School Messenger to deliver important announcements in a timely manner and calls to remind parents of events prior to the event taking place. Letters are also sent home in relation to behavior and academic problems. Enrollment materials are in English and Spanish and IPA has the ability to provide translation services to parents who are not fluent in English.

Board meetings are always announced, as are PTSA meetings, and are at convenient evening hours. Meeting notices are posted on the main doors and with street signs in front of the school. Additional growth of the PTSA is expected in the future, since the current PTSA is now combined across all three schools, forming one K-12 PTSA.

Areas of Strength: Irvington Preparatory Academy staff is friendly and responsive to parents, providing them with information about their students through a variety of different modes of communication.

Recommendations: Continue working to establish an active PTSA.

Irvington Community Elementary School Classroom Observation Summary

On April 23 & 24, 2013, two observers conducted classrooms observations during the 4th year review of Irvington Community Elementary School. Classroom observers spent 6.5 hours (392 minutes) observing 13 classrooms, 264 students, and 13 teachers. On average, each observation lasted 28.8 minutes and the observed student to teacher ratio was 20.3:1. Two of the teachers were observed by both classroom observers at the same time in order to ensure inter-judge reliability.

Classroom Environment

69.2% (9/13) had posted objectives. 100% (13/13) used critical vocabulary. 100% (13/13) had challenging content. 15.8% has posted state standards (2/13). 46.1% (6/13) exhibited differentiation. 100% (13/13) of the instruction observed built on prior knowledge.

Learning Environment

The observers categorized observed learning experiences into four main categories. 100% (13/13) of observed activities were Remember/Understand Activities. 84.6% (11/13) were Apply/Perform Activities. 00.0% (0/13) were Analyze/Evaluate Activities. 7.7% (1/13) were Create/Design Activities. 00.0% (0/13) of activities were found to be ineffective.

100% (13/13) of classrooms contained rich print materials. 46.1% (6/13) showed examples of exemplary work. 69.2% (9/13) displayed a daily schedule. 100% (13/13) had posted behavior expectations. 23.1% (3/13) had culturally relevant materials.

Behavior Management

The site team observed proactive and reactive techniques. The site team recorded 11 (84.6%) classrooms using proactive discipline. 10 (76.9%) classrooms using reactive discipline were recorded. Student engagement varied widely. Please see the table below.

Topic of Lesson	
Reading Centers	Industrial Revolution
Native Americans	Literacy Centers
Math Mini Lesson	Vowels
Poetry	Poetry/Metaphor
American History	Main Idea in Text
Geometry	Simile
Independent Reading	

	All		Most		Half		Few		None	
Proportion of Students Engaged:	Recorded	% Total	Recorded	% Total	Recorded	% Total	Record ed	% Total	Recorded	% Total
Beginning of Lesson	9	69%	4	31%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
First Interval	9	69%	4	31%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Second Interval	2	15%	11	85%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Third Interval	3	23%	10	77%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

Irvington Community Middle School Classroom Observation Summary

On April 16-17, 2013, two observers conducted classrooms observations during the 4th year review of Irvington Community Middle School. Eight classroom observations were performed on site using the classroom observation instrument provided by the Office of Education Innovation. These observations lasted for 20-30 minutes. Classroom observers spent 4.1 hours (246 minutes) observing 8 classrooms, 182 students, and 8 teachers. On average, each observation lasted 30.75 minutes and the observed student to teacher ratio was 22.75:1. Two of the teachers were observed by both classroom observers at the same time in order to ensure inter-judge reliability.

Classroom Environment

87.5% (7/8) had posted objectives. 75.0% (6/8) had posted state standards. 100% (8/8) used critical vocabulary. 100% (8/8) had challenging content. 0% (0/8) exhibited differentiation. 100% (8/8) of the instruction observed built on prior knowledge.

Learning Environment

The observers categorized observed learning experiences into four main categories. 25.0% (2/8) of observed activities were Remember/Understand Activities. 100% (8/8) were Apply/Perform Activities. 37.5% (3/8) were Analyze/Evaluate Activities. 12.5% (1/8) were Create/Design Activities. 00.0% (0/8) of activities were found to be ineffective.

75.0% (6/8) of classrooms contained rich print materials. 12.5% (1/8) showed examples of exemplary work. 62.5% (5/8) displayed a daily schedule. 62.5% (5/8) had posted behavior expectations. 37.5% (3/8) had culturally relevant materials.

Behavior Management

The site team observed proactive and reactive techniques. The site team recorded 8 (100%) classrooms using proactive discipline. 8 (100%) classrooms using reactive discipline were recorded. Please see the table below for student engagement data.

Topic of Lesson	
Midsummer's Night Dream	Plastics Lab
Subject/Verb Agreement	Integers
Louisiana Purchase	Turtle Trivia
Limerick Poetry	Music & Math

Proportion of Students Engaged:	All		Most		Half		Few		None	
	Recorded	% Total	Recorded	% Total	Recorded	% Total	Record ed	% Total	Recorded	% Total
Beginning of Lesson	7	87%	0	0%	1	13%	0	0%	0	0%
First Interval	7	87%	0	0%	1	13%	0	0%	0	0%
Second Interval	5	63%	3	37%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Third Interval	4	50%	4	50%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%

Irvington Preparatory Academy Classroom Observation Summary

On April 12, 2013, two observers conducted classrooms observations during the 4th year review of Irvington Preparatory Academy. Nine classroom observations were performed on site using the classroom observation instrument provided by the Office of Education Innovation. Classroom observers spent 4.5 hours (276 minutes) observing 9 classrooms, 139 students, and 9 teachers. On average, each observation lasted 30.6 minutes and the observed student to teacher ratio was 15.4:1. Two of the teachers were observed by both classroom observers at the same time in order to ensure inter-judge reliability.

Classroom Environment

55.5% (5/9) had posted objectives. 55.5% (5/9) had posted state standards. 88.8% (8/9) used critical vocabulary. 66.6% (6/9) had challenging content. 11.1% (1/9) exhibited differentiation. 100% (9/9) of the instruction observed built on prior knowledge.

Learning Environment

The observers categorized observed learning experiences into four main categories. 77.7% (7/9) of observed activities were Remember/Understand Activities. 44.4% (4/9) were Apply/Perform Activities. 22.2% (2/9) were Analyze/Evaluate Activities. 11.1% (1/9) were Create/Design Activities. 11.1% (1/9) of activities were found to be ineffective.

33.3% (3/9) of classrooms contained rich print materials. 88.8% (8/9) showed examples of exemplary work. 88.8% (8/9) displayed a daily schedule. 100% (9/9) had posted behavior expectations. 77.7% (7/9) had culturally relevant materials.

Behavior Management

The site team observed proactive and reactive techniques. The site team recorded 9 (100%) classrooms using proactive discipline. 9 (100 %) classrooms using reactive discipline were recorded. Please see the table below for student engagement data.

Topic of Lesson	
Evolution	Literary Devices
Angles	Area of Polygon
Derivatives & Integrals	Musical Scales
U.S. Senate	Excel Spreadsheets
Ionic Compounds	

	All		Most		Half		Few		None	
Proportion of Students Engaged:	Recorded	% Total	Recorded	% Total	Recorded	% Total	Record ed	% Total	Recorded	% Total
Beginning of Lesson	3	33%	6	66%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
First Interval	3	33%	6	66%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Second Interval	3	33%	5	55%	1	11%	0	0%	0	0%
Third Interval	2	22%	1	11%	5	55%	0	0%	0	0%

Appendix A Special Education Rubrics:

Core Question 1: Is the educational program a success?

1.1. Is the school making adequate yearly academic progress (AYP), as measured by the Indiana Department of Education's system of accountability?	
Does not meet standard	School has met AYP in less than half of student subgroups for the last two consecutive years. The school's achievement data of students with exceptionalities depict patterns of no growth in one or more academic area.
Approaching standard	School has met AYP in more than half of student subgroups for one of the last two years. The school's achievement data of students with exceptionalities depict patterns of little growth in one or more academic area.
Meets standard	School has met AYP across all student subgroups for the last two years. The school's achievement data of students with exceptionalities depicts patterns of some growth in academic areas.
Exceeds standard	School has exceeded the AYP target in all student subgroups in at least one of the last two years. The school's achievement data of students with exceptionalities depicts patterns of growth in all academic areas.
1.2. Are students making substantial and adequate gains over time, as measured using value-added analysis?	
Does not meet standard	Value-added analysis indicates that less than 50% of tested students made sufficient gains.
Approaching standard	Value-added analysis indicates that 50%-74% of tested students made sufficient gains.
Meets standard	Value-added analysis indicates that more than 75%-89% of tested students made sufficient gains.
Exceeds standard	Value-added analysis indicates that at least 90% of tested students made sufficient gains.
1.3. Is the school outperforming schools that the students would have been assigned to attend?	
Does not meet standard	School's overall performance in terms of proficiency and/or growth is generally lower than that of the schools the students would otherwise have been assigned to attend in each of the last three years.
Approaching standard	School's overall performance in terms of both proficiency and/or growth is generally lower than that of the schools the students would otherwise have been assigned to attend in two of the last three years.
Meets standard	School's overall performance in terms of both proficiency and/or growth is generally as good as that of the schools the students would otherwise have been assigned to attend.
Exceeds standard	School's performance consistently outpaces that of the schools the students would otherwise have been assigned to attend.
1.4. Is the school meeting its school-specific educational goals?	
Does not meet standard	School has clearly not met its school-specific educational goal.
Approaching standard	School is making good progress toward meeting its school-specific educational goal.
Meets standard	School has clearly met its school-specific educational goal.
Exceeds standard	School has clearly exceeded its school-specific educational goal.

Core Question 2: Is the organization effective and well-run?

2.1. Is the school in sound fiscal health?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents concerns in <u>three or more</u> of the following areas: a) its state financial audits (e.g., presence of “significant findings”); b) its financial staffing and systems; c) its success in achieving a balanced budget over the past three years; d) the adequacy of its projections of revenues and expenses for the next three years; e) its fulfillment of financial reporting requirements under Sections 10 and 17 of the charter agreement.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one or two</u> of the following areas: a) its state financial audits (e.g., presence of “significant findings”); b) its financial staffing and systems; c) its success in achieving a balanced budget over the past three years; d) the adequacy of its projections of revenues and expenses for the next three years; e) its fulfillment of financial reporting requirements under Sections 10 and 17 of the charter agreement.
Meets standard	The school presents significant concerns in no more than <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) its state financial audits (e.g., presence of “significant findings”); b) its financial staffing and systems; c) its success in achieving a balanced budget over the past three years; d) the adequacy of its projections of revenues and expenses for the next three years; e) its fulfillment of financial reporting requirements under Sections 10 and 17 of the charter agreement. In addition, if the school presents significant concerns in one area, it has a credible plan for addressing the concern that has been approved by the Mayor’s Office.
Exceeds standard	The school demonstrates satisfactory performance in all of the areas listed in previous levels.
2.2. Are the school’s student enrollment, attendance, and retention rates strong?	
Does not meet standard	The school’s actual enrollment consistently falls short of target enrollment by <u>10% or more</u> . Student attendance and retention rates are consistently below the school’s agreed-upon target rates. Analysis of enrollment and transfer data depicts a drastic proportion of students with exceptionalities leaving the school.
Approaching standard	The school’s actual enrollment consistently falls short of target enrollment by <u>1-9%</u> . Student attendance and retention rates are consistently below the school’s agreed-upon target rates. Analysis of enrollment and transfer data depict large numbers of student with exceptionalities leaving the school.
Meets standard	The school is consistently fully enrolled. Student attendance and retention rates are generally at or above the school’s agreed-upon target rates. Analysis of enrollment and transfer data depicts equivalent numbers of students with and without exceptionalities leaving the school.
Exceeds standard	The school is consistently fully enrolled. Student attendance and retention rates consistently exceed the school’s agreed-upon target rates. Analysis of enrollment and transfer data depict very few, if any, students with exceptional needs leaving the school.
2.3. Is the school’s board active and competent in its oversight?	
Does not meet standard	The school appears to lack clear, consistent, and competent stewardship. The board lacks the number of members specified in the by-laws; it is not well-balanced in member expertise; there has been consistently high turnover on the board unrelated to the term limits stipulated in the board’s by-laws; roles and responsibilities of the board are not clear; it often fails to achieve a quorum.
Approaching standard	Board membership is not complete; there has been some unanticipated turnover on the board unrelated to the term limits stipulated in the board’s by-laws; it is reasonably well-balanced in member expertise; roles and responsibilities on the board are reasonably clear; it is difficult to get a quorum; board subcommittees are somewhat active; the board is developing its ability to provide clear, consistent, and competent stewardship.
Meets standard	The board’s membership collectively contributes a broad skill set and fair representation of the community; board members are knowledgeable about the school; roles and responsibilities of the board are clearly delineated; board meetings reflect thoughtful discussion and progress in the consideration of issues; overall, the board provides consistent and competent stewardship of the school.

Exceeds standard	The board meets the standard for this sub-question AND: displays exceptional expertise and stewardship, as evidenced by significant board actions to enhance the school over time.
2.4. Is there a high level of parent satisfaction with the school?	
Does not meet standard	Less than 70% of parents surveyed indicate that they are satisfied overall with the school.
Approaching standard	More than 70% but less than 80% of parents surveyed indicate that they are satisfied overall with the school.
Meets standard	More than 80% but less than 90% of parents surveyed indicate that they are satisfied overall with the school.
Exceeds standard	At least 90% of parents surveyed indicate that they are satisfied overall with the school.
2.5. Is the school administration strong in its academic and organizational leadership?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address them: a) the leadership has insufficient academic and/or business expertise; b) turnover in leadership has been high and/or damaging to the school; c) roles and responsibilities among leaders and between leaders and the board are generally unclear; d) the school's leadership does not appear to actively engage in a process of continuous improvement; it has made few mid-course corrections in response to problems.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address it: a) the leadership has insufficient academic and/or business expertise; b) turnover in leadership has been high and/or damaging to the school; c) roles and responsibilities among leaders and between leaders and the board are generally unclear; d) the school's leadership does not appear to actively engage in a process of continuous improvement; it has made few mid-course corrections in response to problems.
Meets standard	The school's leadership a) has sufficient academic and/or business expertise; b) has been sufficiently stable over time; c) has clearly defined roles and responsibilities among leaders and between leaders and the board; d) actively engages in a process of continuous improvement which has led to some mid-course corrections.
Exceeds standard	The leadership displays exceptional academic and business expertise. Leadership turnover has been manageable and appropriate. Roles and responsibilities among leaders and between leaders and the board are clear. The leadership has established exemplary processes to engage in continuous improvement which have led to significant enhancements to the school over time.
2.6. Is the school meeting its school-specific organizational and management performance goals?	
Does not meet standard	School has clearly not met its school-specific organizational goal.
Approaching standard	School is making good progress toward meeting its school-specific organizational goal.
Meets standard	School has clearly met its school-specific organizational goal.
Exceeds standard	School has clearly exceeded its school-specific organizational goal.

Core Question 3: Is the school meeting its operations and access obligations?

3.1. Has the school satisfactorily completed all of its organizational and governance obligations?	
Does not meet standard	School presents significant concerns in two or more of its organizational and governance obligations as specified in the Compliance and Governance Handbook, with no evidence of a credible plan to address them: a) maintenance of adequate "compliance and governance binder" containing all required documents; b) completion of criminal background checks on all board members; c) transparency of meetings and decision-making in accordance with open meetings obligations; d) maintenance of adequate board minutes.

Approaching standard	School presents significant concerns in one of its organizational and governance obligations as specified in the Compliance and Governance Handbook, with no evidence of a credible plan to address it: a) maintenance of adequate “compliance and governance binder” containing all required documents; b) completion of criminal background checks on all board members; c) transparency of meetings and decision-making in accordance with open meetings obligations; d) maintenance of adequate board minutes
Meets standard	School has substantially completed all of its organizational and governance obligations as specified in the Compliance and Governance Handbook, including: a) maintenance of adequate “compliance and governance binder” containing all required documents; b) completion of criminal background checks on all board members; c) transparency of meetings and decision-making in accordance with open meetings obligations; d) maintenance of adequate board minutes. Any concerns are minor and the school presents a credible plan to address them.
3.2. Is the school’s physical plant safe and conducive to learning?	
Does not meet standard	The facility requires <u>much</u> improvement in order to provide a safe environment that is conducive to learning. Significant health and safety code requirements have not been met AND/OR the school <u>lacks</u> many conditions such as the following: a design well-suited to meet the curricular and social needs of its students, faculty, and community members; a size appropriate for the enrollment and student-teacher ratios in each class; adequate maintenance and security; well-maintained equipment and furniture that match the educational needs of the students; and accessibility to all students. Facilities do not meet ADA standards for universal accessibility.
Approaching standard	Significant health and safety code requirements are being met, but the facility needs <u>some</u> improvement in order to provide a safe environment that is conducive to learning. It <u>partially</u> – but not fully – provides conditions such as the following: a design well-suited to meet the curricular and social needs of its students, faculty, and community members; a size appropriate for the enrollment and student-teacher ratios in each class; good maintenance and security; well-maintained equipment and furniture that match the educational needs of the students; and accessibility to all students. Facilities do not meet ADA standards for universal accessibility.
Meets standard	Significant health and safety code requirements are being met AND the facility generally provides a safe environment that is conducive to learning, based on conditions such as: a design well-suited to meet the curricular and social needs of its students, faculty, and community members; a size appropriate for the enrollment and student-teacher ratios in each class; good maintenance and security; well-maintained equipment and furniture that match the educational needs of the students; and accessibility to all students. Facilities meets ADA standards for universal accessibility.
3.3. Has the school established and implemented a fair and appropriate pupil enrollment process?	
Does not meet standard	The school’s enrollment process does not comply with applicable law AND/OR the school exhibits one or both of the following deficiencies a) a substantial number of documented parent complaints suggest that it is not being implemented fairly or appropriately; b) the school has not engaged in outreach to students throughout the community.
Approaching standard	The school’s enrollment process complies with applicable law but exhibits one or both the following deficiencies: a) a substantial number of documented parent complaints suggest that it is not being implemented fairly or appropriately; b) the school has not engaged in outreach to students throughout the community.
Meets standard	The school’s enrollment process complies with applicable law; there are minimal documented parent complaints suggesting that it is not being implemented fairly or appropriately; AND the school has engaged in outreach to students throughout the community.
3.4. Do the school’s special education files demonstrate that it is in legal compliance and is moving	

towards best practice?	
Does not meet standard	The school's special education files present concerns in two or more of the following areas: a) services outlined within Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) do not adequately match the exceptional needs of the student; b) each need identified within the IEP does not have a corresponding goal and plan for assessment; c) all goals are not rigorous or based on state or national learning standards; d) evidence does not demonstrate that goals have evolved each year as the student developed; e) specifically designed curriculum is not outlined; and f) files are not in legal compliance.
Approaching standard	The school's special education files present concerns in one of the following areas: a) services outlined within Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) do not adequately match the exceptional needs of the student; b) each need identified within the IEP does not have a corresponding goal and plan for assessment; c) all goals are not rigorous or based on state or national learning standards; d) evidence does not demonstrate that goals have evolved each year as the student developed; e) specifically designed curriculum is not outlined or f) files are not in legal compliance.
Meets standard	All of the following are evident in the school's special education files: a) services outlined within Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) adequately match the exceptional needs of the student; b) each need identified within the IEP has a corresponding goal and plan for assessment; c) each goal is rigorous and is based on state and national learning standards; d) explicit evidence exists to demonstrate that goals have evolved each year as the student develops; e) specifically designed curriculum is outlined.
Exceeds Standard	The school has consistently met this standard over time, across multiple reviews.
3.5. Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related To access and services to English as a Second Language (ESL) students?	
Does not meet standard	The school is not fulfilling its legal obligations regarding ESL students, and requires substantial improvement in order to achieve conditions such as the following: appropriate staff have a clear understanding of current legislation, research and effective practices relating to the provision of ESL services; relationships with students, parents, and external providers that are well-managed and comply with law and regulation.
Approaching standard	The school is not yet completely fulfilling all of its legal obligations regarding ESL students, and requires some (but not considerable) improvement to fully achieve conditions such as the following: appropriate staff have a clear understanding of current legislation, research and effective practices relating to the provision of ESL services; relationships with students, parents, and external providers that are well-managed and comply with law and regulation.
Meets standard	The school is fulfilling its legal obligations regarding ESL students, as indicated by conditions such as the following: appropriate staff have a clear understanding of current legislation, research and effective practices relating to the provision of ESL services; relationships with students, parents, and external providers that are well-managed and comply with law and regulation.

Core Question 4: Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?

4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in two or more of the following areas: a) the curriculum does not align with the state standards; b) the school does not conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school does not regularly review scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) the sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas does not focus on core (prioritized) learning objectives; e) the staff lacks understanding and/or consensus as to how the curriculum documents and related program materials are used to effectively deliver instruction; f) there is a lack of programs and materials available to deliver the curriculum effectively.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in one of the following areas: a) the curriculum does not align with the state standards; b) the school does not conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school does not regularly review scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) the sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas does not focus on core (prioritized) learning objectives; e) the staff lacks understanding and/or consensus as to how the curriculum documents and related program materials are used to effectively deliver instruction; f) there is a lack of programs and materials available to deliver the curriculum effectively.
Meets standard	The school: a) curriculum aligns with the state standards; b) conducts systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school regularly reviews scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) has a sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas that is prioritized and focuses on the core learning objectives; e) the staff understands and uniformly uses curriculum documents and related program materials to effectively deliver instruction; f) programs and materials are available to deliver the curriculum effectively.
4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in two or more of the following areas: a) the curriculum is not implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is not focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery lacks the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities lack variety and/or limited use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) staff do not receive feedback on instructional practices; f) instructional methods for special education services do not align with school mission, data, or staffing procedures.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in one of the following areas: a) the curriculum is not implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is not focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery lacks the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities lack variety and/or limited use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) staff do not receive feedback on instructional practices; f) instructional methods for special education services do not align with school mission, data, or staffing procedures.
Meets standard	The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) the curriculum is implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery possesses the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities possess variety and/or use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) supplies sufficient feedback to staff on instructional practices; f) instructional methods for special education services align with school mission, data, or staffing procedures.
4.3. For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support preparation for post-secondary options?	

Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in two or more of the following areas: a) the school's academic program lacks challenging coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement courses, internships, independent study) to prepare students for rigorous post-secondary opportunities; b) lack of high expectations to motivate and prepare students for post-secondary academic opportunities; c) insufficient material resources and personnel guidance available to inform students of post-secondary options; d) limited opportunities for extracurricular engagement and activities (e.g., athletics, academic clubs, vocational) to increase post-secondary options; e) the school does not meet Indiana Core 40 graduation standard requirements; g.) students with exceptional needs are not provided transitional services as outlined by Article 7.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in one of the following areas: a) the school's academic program lacks challenging coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement courses, internships, independent study) to prepare students for rigorous post-secondary opportunities; b) lack of high expectations to motivate and prepare students for post-secondary academic opportunities; c) insufficient material resources and personnel guidance available to inform students of post-secondary options; d) limited opportunities for extracurricular engagement and activities (e.g., athletics, academic clubs, vocational) to increase post-secondary options; e) the school does not meet Indiana Core 40 graduation standard requirements; g.) students with exceptional needs are provided minimal transition services in accordance with Article 7.
Meets standard	The school: a) has challenging coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement courses, internships, independent study) to prepare students for rigorous post-secondary opportunities; b) has high expectations to motivate and prepare students for post-secondary academic opportunities; c) has sufficient material resources and personnel guidance available to inform students of post-secondary options; d) presents opportunities for extracurricular engagement and activities (e.g., athletics, academic clubs, vocational) to increase post-secondary options; e) meets or exceeds Indiana Core 40 graduation standard requirements; g.) Evidence provided of transition plans and services provided to students with exceptional needs and their families; including but not limited to vocational rehabilitation services and a plan for services post high school is outlined.
4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in two or more of the following areas: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are not accurate or useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are not received by classroom teachers in a timely or useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments lack sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is limited frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are not used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in one of the following areas: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are not accurate or useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are not received by classroom teachers in a timely or useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments lack sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is limited frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are not used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.
Meets standard	The school: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are accurate and useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are received by classroom teachers in a timely and useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments have sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is sufficient frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.
4.5. Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in two or more of the following areas: a) hiring

	processes are not organized to support the success of new staff members; b) inefficient or insufficient deployment of faculty and staff limits instructional time and capacity; c) faculty and staff are not certified/trained in areas to which they are assigned; d) professional development (PD) does not relate to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement; e) PD is not determined through analyses of student attainment and improvement; f) the teacher evaluation plan is not explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria; g.) special education staff and professional development are inadequate when compared to quantity of students with exceptional needs and severity of needs.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in one of the following areas: a) hiring processes are not organized to support the success of new staff members; b) inefficient or insufficient deployment of faculty and staff limits instructional time and capacity; c) faculty and staff are not certified/trained in areas to which they are assigned; d) professional development (PD) does not relate to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement; e) PD is not determined through analyses of student attainment and improvement; f) the teacher evaluation plan is not explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria; g.) special education staff and professional development are adequate when compared to quantity of students with exceptional needs and severity of needs.
Meets standard	The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) hiring processes are organized and used to support the success of new staff members; b) the school deploys sufficient number of faculty and staff to maximize instructional time and capacity; c) faculty and staff are certified/trained in areas to which they are assigned; d) professional development (PD) is related to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement; e) PD opportunities are determined through analyses of student attainment and improvement; f) the teacher evaluation plan is explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria; g.) special education staff and professional development are highly qualified and well matched when compared to quantity of students with exceptional needs and severity of needs.
4.6. Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in both of the following areas: a) significant disagreements exist among stakeholders about the school's mission; b) there is a lack of widespread knowledge and commitment to the intentions of the school's mission.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in one of the following areas: a) significant disagreements exist among stakeholders about the school's mission; b) there is a lack of widespread knowledge and commitment to the intentions of the school's mission.
Meets standard	The school: a) has a mission that is shared by all stakeholders; b) has stakeholders possessing widespread knowledge and commitment to the intentions of the school's mission.
4.7. Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in two or more of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address them: a) The school does not have clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach does not possess high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are disrespectful and/or unsupportive and there are non-existing or unclear processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are unprofessional and/or unproductive; g.) evidence that students with exceptional needs are not valued members of the school community.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in one of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address it: a) The school does not have clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach does not possess high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are disrespectful and/or unsupportive and there are non-existing or unclear processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are unprofessional and /or unproductive; g.) evidence that students with exceptional needs are included in the school community
Meets standard	The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) the school has clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach possesses high expectations for

	student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are respectful and supportive and faculty and students are clear about processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are professional and constructive; g.) evidence that students with exceptionalities are welcomed into the school community and held to high expectations.
4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in two or more of the following areas: a) there is a lack of active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) school communication is neither timely nor relevant to the parental concerns; c) student academic progress and achievement reports are not clearly reported and/or misunderstood; d) the school's communication methods are not well-designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., not communicating in parents' native languages, communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at inconvenient times for parents); e) data collected from families reveal patterns of miscommunication, inadequate services, or IEPs not being followed.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in one of the following areas: a) there is a lack of active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) school communication is neither timely nor relevant to the parental concerns; c) student academic progress and achievement reports are not clearly reported and/or misunderstood; d) the school's communication methods are not well-designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., not communicating in parents' native languages, communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at inconvenient times for parents); e) data collected from families reveal patterns of miscommunication, inadequate services, or IEPs not being followed.
Meets standard	The school: a) has active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) utilizes communications that are both timely and relevant to the parental concerns; c) communicates student academic progress and achievement in reports that are understood by parents; d) the school's communication methods are designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., communicating in parents' native languages, not communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at convenient times for parents); e) data collected from families reveal patterns of communication, adequate services, or IEPs being followed.

